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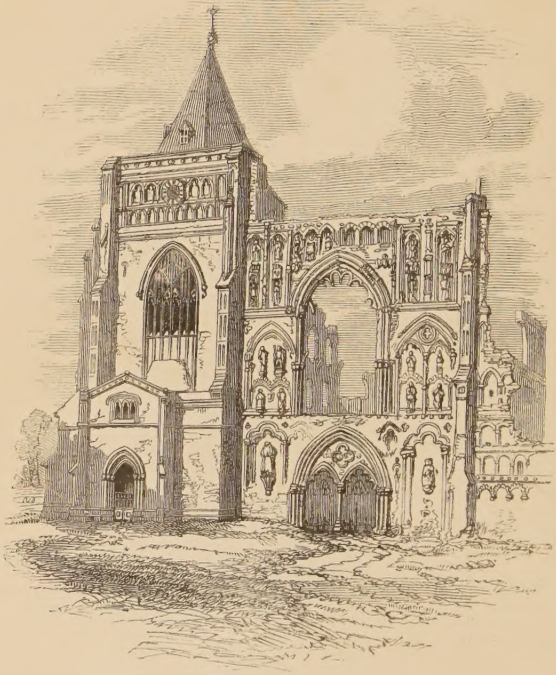

CROYLAND ABBEY.

MONKS AND MONASTERIES;

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BEING

AN ACCOUNT

OF

English Monachism.

By SAMUEL FOX, M.A., F.S.A.,
RECTOR OF MORLEY, DERBYSHIRE.

LONDON:
JAMES BURNS, 17, PORTMAN STREET,
PORTMAN SQUARE.

1845.

TO THE

LORD JOHN MANNERS, M.P.,

A NOBLEMAN

WHO ADORNS HIS HIGH ANCESTRAL RANK

BY DEVOTING THE ENERGIES OF

A POWERFUL MIND

TO THE BEST INTERESTS OF HIS COUNTRY,

THIS VOLUME

IS RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED.

PFEFFER 12 57

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PREFACE.

THE monastic system having been intimately connected with the English Church until the rude arm of secular power effected its overthrow, it not only affords abundant matter for the serious contemplation of the devout Churchman, but is also a source from whence much valuable instruction may be derived by those who are labouring to ameliorate the condition, and raise the moral standard of that portion of the community which appears to be plunged in the lowest depths of sorrow and suffering.

Many are the schemes which have been tried in order to benefit our indigent fellow-creatures, but they have all been found insufficient for the attainment of their praiseworthy object. One reason which may be assigned for their universal failure is, that our rulers have hitherto appeared to be afraid of standing in the old ways, and asking for the old paths where is the good way, and walking therein,* lest they should give offence to that utilitarian spirit which has unhappily so long prevailed in the councils of this nation. This spirit looks down with proud contempt upon many of those institutions under whose fostering care our country became for centuries the admiration and envy of surrounding nations; and because they do not exactly square with the modern notions of expediency, they are refused a hearing at the bar of reason and common sense. The monastic system may be included in this category. The fallacy, however, seems to be at length giving way, which identifies the name of monastery with the worst

* Jer. vi., 16.

errors and corruptions of the Church of Rome, and fills the mind with reminiscences of nothing but vice and profligacy, at the mere mention of the monastic system. We are, therefore, beginning to regard the venerable ruins which are scattered throughout the length and breadth of the land with feelings of shame and sorrow, as the hallowed monuments of ancient works of mercy overthrown by our ancestors' misguided violence. It is true, and we are far from wishing to conceal the fact, that previously to the Reformation, many abuses had crept into the monastic system, which so far disgraced it in the eyes of Englishmen, as to render them, in an age of religious excitement, the consenting spectators of its destruction. But we should always recollect that these abuses were not the natural fruits of the system, nor the necessary consequences which result from the seclusion of a body of men from this world's business; their source is rather to be traced to that deeply-seated propensity to evil, which is inherent in our fallen nature. The abuses

alluded to are so far from being necessarily incorporated with the monastic system, that they are violently opposed to that system in its pure and early state. A monastery, as it will be more fully shewn in the following pages, is a society, connected by the bond of strict obedience to certain rules, and has, as its primary object, the physical, moral, and religious improvement of mankind.

Monachism has existed under the Jewish, as well as under the Christian dispensation, and has been maintained in connexion with the Eastern, as well as Western Church; and although it is now chiefly fostered by the Greek and Roman Churches, yet it seems by no means an easy undertaking to assign a satisfactory reason why a relapse to the errors of Romanism need be dreaded by the re-establishment of monastic institutions in communion with the Church of England, and as integral parts of her constitution; for we should ever bear in mind, that the Reformation professed to restore our ancient faith and practice; a faith and practice which

did not merely tolerate, but which actually gloried in the magnificence and splendour of its monastic foundations. This restoration will be incomplete so long as we are deprived of collegiate houses, assimilated in object to those which were swept away in the sixteenth century, and only changed in a judicious adaptation of their rules to the character and necessities of later times.

If, against the re-establishment of monastic institutions in connexion with the Church of England, it should be urged, that as abuses formerly crept into monasteries, so they may again be expected, we would reply that this assumption rests upon untenable grounds. In the first place, there is no more reason to expect corruption in reformed monastic institutions, than there is to anticipate corruption in the colleges of our universities; or, indeed, in the Anglican Church itself. Besides, the argument which is derivable from past abuses, is rather favourable than adverse to the establishment of monasteries, inasmuch as it diminishes the probability of their recurrence, by exciting a greater vigil-

ance in the proceedings of such societies, and providing safe-guards against those avenues, through which corruption might be expected to advance. Thus the faintest appearance of corruption would be immediately detected, and means would be applied for its instantaneous correction. Nor is this all; the feeling that such an institution was contending with an unfriendly prejudice, would almost necessarily lead to a correspondent policy: for wariness, circumspection, and an avoidance even of the semblance of evil, usually mark the conduct of men who are conscious that all their actions are scrutinized by invidious judges.

Hence we might anticipate much good from the revival of monasticism in close union with our branch of Christ's Holy Catholic Church; for it would be the means not only of remedying the defects which are felt to exist in promoting the temporal and eternal interests of mankind, but it would also be found a source of unspeakable comfort to many who would gladly avail themselves of the opportunity which would

thus be afforded, of retiring from the noise and tumult of the world, and spending their hours in meditation and prayer.

It is a subject altogether which has great claims upon our serious consideration, and one which in the present posture of our affairs, will not be thrust aside by inconsiderate invectives. Many minds are already awake to its great importance, and it is to be hoped that the number is daily increasing. "If monasteries," says an accomplished writer, "instead of being swept away, had been reformed; if they had been reserved for persons not tied by monastic vows, but who, satisfied to endure hardships, and content with poverty, were ready from the pure love of God to devote themselves to preaching, study and prayer, our large towns would have been supplied, not as now, with three or four overburdened clergymen, but with a numerous body of men, ready, under episcopal guidance, to do the work of Apostles and Evangelists, to multitudes (the expression is not too strong), now lying in darkness and in the shadow of death."

A fearful picture is presented by the population which we see rising up around us, in a state of religious destitution and ignorance, from which little can be expected but immorality and vice: for although the hand of private bounty has been freely extended, and unwearied exertions have been made to carry the inspired volume into many a court and alley in which an all but heathen ignorance prevails, yet comparatively little has been done in our densely-populated towns, from the want of combination; and every day's occurrence proves the truth of this, and shews the utter impossibility of ameliorating the condition of the outcasts of society, with the present insufficient and defective machinery. If, however, monasteries were once more established, and adapted, not merely to the altered condition of the Anglican Church, but to the present state of the country, the people who now feel themselves despised and neglected, would at the gate of the monastery learn that their sufferings were not unheeded. There they might, perhaps, be induced to forget the ex-

asperating influence of the Poor Laws; and while the inmate of the monastery sought in his daily rounds the abode of poverty, and the chamber of sorrow, it is impossible to over estimate the moral influence which such societies would exercise over a widely extended sphere, which is now, for the most part, abandoned to the worst passions of mankind. Nor would their influence be one whit the less in bringing up the rising generation in those sound principles which are truly designated "the nurture and admonition of the Lord." Through these means, which would be far more powerful than the present operations of the excellent National School Society, our youth would probably be kept in that straight, but narrow path, which the Church of Christ prescribes; and thus in a great measure would be preserved from wandering into the seductive mazes of error.

The various offices which a monastic system would require its members to perform, would afford a suitable training for the ministry of the Church, for those who having already

graduated at our Universities, are still inexperienced in parochial duties. Thus while the theological student was lightening the duties which are necessarily oppressive in a crowded population, and rendering the ministrations of the Church far more effective than they otherwise could possibly be, he would be qualifying himself for the profitable discharge of the higher and more responsible duties of the Church, whenever the entire charge of a parish should be entrusted to his care. The want of this sort of training has often been felt in our branch of the Church, and various schemes have been proposed in order to remedy the deficiency; but none appear to offer such unexceptionable advantages as a reformed monastic establishment, under the control of the Bishop of the diocese in which it might be situated.

Great as would be the advantage in other respects in a revival of monastic institutions their efficieney would, perhaps, be most powerfully recognised in subduing the selfish influences of the age common to every commercial community,

and generating the seeds of their destruction: thus wholesomely directing the energies of national development. That much danger at present exists from our national advancement no one can deny; neither can we be blind to the disastrous effects which have resulted from the wholesale spoliation of the Anglican Church in the sixteenth century. It is to this that our present low and feeble condition, as a national Church, must be attributed; and although the Church of these realms is now putting forth in a wonderful manner that innate strength with which she has been endowed from on high, yet so long as sectarian jealousy prevails on the one hand, and a want of moral courage on the other, but feeble hopes can be entertained of a *national* improvement. It has been sensibly observed that "the Reformation extirpated those gross errors which had by degrees crept into the Church, but the nation groans to this day by the demolition of the religious houses, and by the mode in which their lands and revenues were seized upon." And the same writer fur-

ther remarks, that "we must readily admit the truth of this last observation, when we look at the miserable manner in which the existing conventual churches are endowed."* That the spoliation of monastic endowments, to which allusion has been made, was a violent and wicked measure, must be admitted; and, therefore, it is to be hoped that when the importance of reviving the monastic system in connexion with the Church of England shall force itself upon the attention of our rulers, those who have participated in the confiscation of abbey lands will not be among the last to assist in effecting the re-establishment and reformation of that which their ancestors wantonly destroyed.

The writer cannot conclude these prefatory lines, without expressing his humble hope that this little volume may assist in dispelling the prejudices which still remain with regard to the monastic institutions of this country; and it is now placed in the reader's hands with an earnest entreaty, that he will not form a rash opinion on

* See Markland's "Remarks," p. 13.

a subject, which, whatever may have been its defects, was evidently an instrument in the hands of Almighty God for accomplishing great and important purposes; and which is still capable of being rendered subservient to His glory, and to the amelioration and benefit of mankind.

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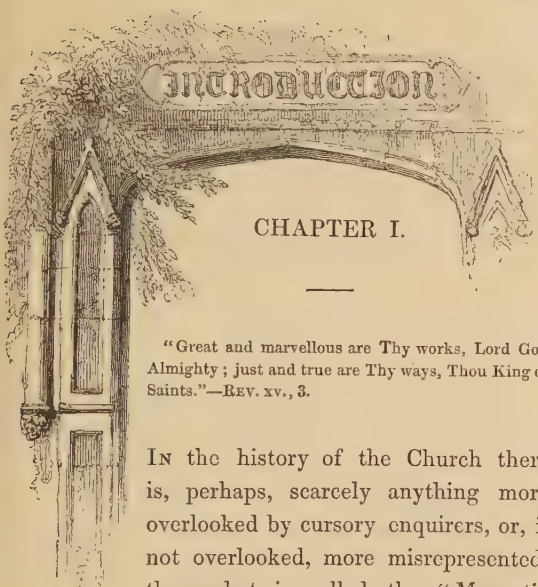

CHAPTER I.

"Great and marvellous are Thy works, Lord God Almighty; just and true are Thy ways, Thou King of Saints."—REV. xv., 3.

IN the history of the Church there is, perhaps, scarcely anything more overlooked by cursory enquirers, or, if not overlooked, more misrepresented, than what is called the "Monastic System." It is a system, according to some, teeming with iniquity; a system founded on ignorance, contributing to enslave the mind, and subject the body to the lusts of the flesh; in short, a waste, and howling moral wilderness, without one verdant spot of truth, on which the straining eye can rest! Such, however, we hope to be able to shew, was not its original source, or its

real character; for although we acknowledge that abuses conspired, both in England and in other countries, to bring on its ruin and decay, yet we maintain, that it had been, on the whole, productive of much good, and may justly be regarded as an instrument in the hands of God for the preservation of His revealed will, in seasons, and through ages, of difficulty and danger. It may, perhaps, be said that, as Christ promised to abide with His Church for ever, His presence would have preserved His revealed will, without the aid of other means. This, however, would have required a miraculous intervention of Divine power, to effect that which can be accomplished through the instrumentality of common agents; and as this is not the usual method of God's dealing with His creatures, we should accept His boon in His own appointed way. We should feel grateful to the Almighty Giver for dispensing to us His bounty, and not despise the channel through which it flowed in rich abundance to us.

While the monastic walls preserved inviolate the Word of God, and rescued from oblivion the teaching of Apostles, and apostolic men, their roof afforded a lodging to the weary traveller, and their hospitable board supplied the poor and destitute with food. Nor were these the only benefits which the system yielded. It furnished a Christian home

for the lonely, and means for the exercise of religious zeal and self-denial; and thus kept those who aimed at the highest degree of spiritual perfection, from violating the unity of the Spirit, and the bond of peace.

Such asylums being, at present, closed against the members of our branch of the Church, those who amongst us are desirous of emulating the asceticism of an earlier age, are tempted to think they shall find it in a foreign communion, where the shadow of ancient discipline may still linger in the convents of La Trappe. This painful experience led Archbishop Leighton to think that, in the sixteenth century, it would have been more advisable to have reformed the monasteries, than to have suppressed them; and thus to have preserved in close connexion with our Church, a refuge for those who were weary of the world, or who might be desirous of secluding themselves from its snares and temptations, and passing their whole lives in religious meditation and retirement. *

* "He thought that the great and fatal error of the Reformation was, that more of those houses, and of that course of life, free from the entanglement of vows, and other mixture, was not preserved; so that the Protestant Churches had neither places of education, nor retreat for men of mortified tempers."—*Middleton's Life of Archbishop Leighton*, p. xxiv., ed. 18:9.

CHAPTER II.

ORIGIN OF MONACHISM. ORIENTAL MONKS. ST. ANTONY. ST. BASIL. ST. BASIL'S RULE.

"They wandered in deserts, and in mountains, and in dens and caves of the earth."—Heb. xi., 38.

BEFORE a just opinion of the monastic system can be formed, it is necessary to investigate its real nature, whence it originated, and what its object was; and, in doing this, the mind should be disengaged, as much as possible, from the prejudice which is apt to be engendered by the discovery of abuses, or by the repetition of calumnies, which mistaken zeal has uttered, and an indifference to the cause or truth, or even avowed hostility, has, in too many instances, propagated. It is, indeed, to be feared that many of these calumnies were industriously circulated as a

justification of the sacrilegious plunder, which has indelibly stained the pages of the sixteenth century, and which we have lived to see re-acted with still less remorse, at the close of the last century, in France, and within the last few years in Spain.

Whatever may have been the crimes, real or pretended, which have been urged against monasteries, it is desirable that the English reader should be made acquainted with these institutions, and thus avoid the unfairness of trying the merits of this ancient system, by the morals and habits of the nineteenth century, although, perhaps, in some respects, the comparison will not altogether redound to the credit of the present times.

The monastic system first arose among the Oriental Christians, whose warm and imaginative disposition readily embraced a form of religious worship, which seemed to bring the worshipper into closer union with the Creator, than he had hitherto enjoyed, and to promise him the highest degree of happiness in the world to come. Like all other systems, however, it was not, at first, fully developed. It commenced with those wandering recluses, who, shutting themselves out from the commerce of the world, passed the whole of their life in solitary retirement.* Such devotion could not long escape the observation

* Cassian, Lib. 5., c. 36.

which it shunned, and the celebrity which these austerities acquired, was witnessed by the withdrawal from the world of numerous followers. Among these, the name of Paul of Thebes has attained considerable notoriety.* These recluses, or hermits, or anchorites (for they were known by various appellations), maintained, that silence, tranquillity, repose, and solitude, accompanied by such acts of mortification, as might tend to extenuate and exhaust the body, were the chief means placed within the reach of man for attaining such a celestial frame of mind, as would best fit it for receiving instruction in those things which appertained to the future life.† As these principles naturally accorded with the warm and ardent tempers of the east, they were embraced by multitudes, who, by peopling the deserts, almost destroyed the solitude they sought; but it was the means of preparing the way for a further development of the system. At this point the history of monachism becomes more definite, and is free from those uncertainties in which, for the most part, the lives of Paul and other early ascetics, are involved. ‡

In the third century, a great stimulus was given

* Cassian, Lib. xi., c. 24

† Epist. B Macarii Codex Reg. p. 51, et Evagrii Monach. sentent Cod. Reg. Append., p. 54.

‡ Reg. Solitariorum, c. 1.

to asceticism by the devotion of Ammon, who, when young, is said to have had a great aversion to marriage. His friends, however, having persuaded him to overcome his aversion, and to consent to take a wife, he resolved to maintain inviolate that purity which it had been the great object of his life to cultivate. Accordingly when he had received his bride, he took her apart, and read to her from St. Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians,* the Apostle's admonition to married persons; and from other sources he enlarged upon the greatness of the inconveniences which frequently attended the estate of matrimony, and the advantages which accompanied chastity; adding, that virginity places persons in the nearest alliance to God. He then persuaded his bride to renounce a secular life, and they agreed to maintain their purity, in a mountain of Nitria, in Egypt. There they spent the remainder of their lives in the exercise of the strictest asceticism. Ammon had many imitators; so that, by degrees, the mountains of Nitria were filled with men emulating his austerities.†

Asceticism, however, was brought into the greatest repute by Antony, who was a cotemporary of Ammon, and who died about the middle of the fourth century, at the great age of 105 years. He commenced his ascetic life, according to the usual

* 1 Cor. ch. vii. † Socrates' Ecc. Hist., lib. iv. ch. 23.

custom, by retiring to a place not far from his own home. Here he remained for a while to steady and fix his mind in his new habits, and to gain what advice he was able from those who had more experience than himself. Hearing that in the next village there was an aged man, who had lived a solitary life from his youth, he adopted a similar retirement in the neighbourhood of the village. If, indeed, he heard of any one who had attained celebrity in retirement, he invariably sought him out. During this time he spent his hours in labour and prayer; and with regard to his knowledge of the Scriptures, it is said his memory served him for a book. Thus he gained the affections of all with whom he met, subjecting himself sincerely to all the zealous men whom he visited; and marking down in his own thoughts the special attainments of each in zeal and self-denial.

One he found remarkable for refinement of manners, another for long continuance in prayer, a third for meekness, a fourth for kindness, a fifth for long vigils, and a sixth for studiousness: and in one and all he noted the adoration of Christ, and love one towards another. Thus furnished, he returned to his own retreat, henceforth combining in himself their separate exercises, and zealously minded to exemplify them all.*

* Vita S. Antonii, p. 8.

In so doing, however, he had much to contend with; and his biographer, St. Athanasius, describes the various stratagems which the arch-enemy of mankind devised for the purpose of undermining his resolves. But these trials were the means of strengthening his devotion; and the danger with which he knew himself to be surrounded, only rendered him more watchful and diligent in working out his own salvation with that fear and trembling, which alone can secure us from falling. "The Lord," said St. Athanasius, "who once bore our flesh, wrought with him, and gave the victory to his body against the wiles of the devil." This, however, led to an increased asceticism, so that he daily more and more chastened his body, and brought it into subjection.*

He had spent nearly twenty years thus exercising himself in seclusion, when many, who longed to copy his ascetic life, coming with some acquaintances, and forcibly breaking open his door, Antony, it is said, came forth as from some shrine, fully perfected in all its mysteries. This was his first appearance outside the enclosure; and those who had come to see him were struck with surprise at the little change his person had undergone, having neither that fulness of habit, which arises from want of exercise;

* Vita, p. 13. Cassian, lib. 9. c. 8.

nor the shrivelled character which betokens fasts. He was the same as they had known him before his retreat. His mind was serene; neither narrowed by sadness, nor relaxed by indulgence; neither too merry, nor too sad. He showed no confusion at the sight of the multitude, nor elation at their respectful greetings. The Lord gave him grace in speech, so that he comforted many who were in sorrow, and reconciled those who were at variance, adding in every case, that they ought to set nothing of this world before love towards Christ. And while he conversed with the people, and exhorted them to remember the bliss to come, and God's loving kindness to us men, in not sparing His own Son, but giving Him up for us all, he persuaded many to choose the monastic life.* The example of Antony having been followed by many, the catalogue of eastern ascetics might be swelled by the enumeration of many names held in high esteem in the same district of the early Church, such, for instance, as those of Didymus, Arsenius, Pambos, and the two who bore the name of Macarius; but as little remains to us of these holy men, except the writings of a few among them, we pass on to St. Basil, through whose exertions the system which Antony

* The "Church of the Fathers," ch. 18, 19. Antony prescribed, 48. Rules for observance. Cod. Reg., p. 3, et seq.

first brought into esteem, was changed from a solitary to a social and united system. St. Basil was ordained a priest of the Church of Cæsarea, where he ministered till the heresy of Arius reached that Church, and infected Dianius, who at that time was Bishop of Cæsarea. Finding himself unable to compose the troubles which this fatal heresy introduced, he then withdrew from his ministry, and retreated into Pontus, for the purpose of devoting himself to study and self-discipline. Here, however, he was far from being inactive; for he procured a number of monasteries to be founded, over one of which he himself presided. Although he was thus secluded from the world, he was not unmindful of the charities of life; for during the period of his retirement, a famine having occurred in the neighbouring country, he converted such lands as he possessed, into money, to supply the wants of the destitute, and took upon himself particularly the care of the children.

The monasteries which St. Basil was the means of founding became, in a short time, schools for that holy teaching, which had been almost banished from the Arian churches; and it is, moreover, said, that he was in the habit of making a circuit of the neighbouring towns, for the purpose of preaching the doctrines which had been confirmed by the council of Nicæa, but which had been in a great measure ex-

ploded from the eastern Church by the followers of Arius. Thus a lasting benefit was conferred upon the Church in the hour of apostasy, by these ascetics; and we, as well as those who then benefitted by their exertions, have cause to be grateful to them for their unceasing labours. When other heresies prevailed, the solitaries of the day took part against them, and were instrumental, in the hands of Divine Providence, in rescuing truth from the errors with which it was in danger of being overlaid, and conducing to its permanent establishment.

As soon as monastics associated together, and formed themselves into regular societies, it became necessary to frame certain rules by which they might be governed; and which being understood and acknowledged by all the members of the society, preserved them from those irregularities and dissensions, which would otherwise have unavoidably arisen. The earliest of these rules were those formed by St. Basil, and they were of a particularly Scriptural character, and formed, as it were, a practical commentary upon those portions of Sacred Writ, relating to the duty which we owe to God, as well as that which is due to our fellow-creatures. As monastic bodies, however, multiplied, these rules were found insufficient for their government, especially since men, in after times, were induced to join

them occasionally from motives of convenience, as well as from those which arose from a true devotional feeling.*

In the preface to the rules which St. Basil prescribed for the observance of the monks of his time, he enforced the obligation, which is incumbent upon all who teach, to remain faithful to the doctrines in which *they* had been instructed, and to be always ready to afford information to the ignorant. In thus conveying instruction, they were to be guided by the attainments of those who sought for knowledge, reserving the mysteries of the faith for the ears of those who, as they judged, had made such a progress in religious knowledge, as really to profit from being instructed in the deep and awful mysteries of our holy religion. He insisted upon the necessity of the monks employing all their time either in the congregations, or in retirement, and only to devote those hours to rest which nature absolutely required; thus following the example of David, in meditating on the law of God both day and night. He considered that, by being united together in a fraternity, they would be better able to impart instruction to each other; and he enforced this duty of mutual instruction by a reference to St. Paul's apprehension of danger if he preached not the Gospel,

* See Basil de Inst. Monach., p. 538, et seq.

as well as our Lord's declaration of the increased punishment which would fall upon that servant, who, knowing his Lord's will, prepared not himself, neither did according to His will.*

The rules which follow are ninety-five in number, and embraced all those particulars which the circumstances of the times required.†

The rules which more particularly apply to monastics, are contained in twenty-five chapters. The first enjoins the monks to live together for the sake of mutual help, comfort, instruction, exercise of virtue, efficacy of prayer, and security from danger.

2. That none without trial, should be admitted into their fraternity.

3. That they should dispose of their wealth to the poor and needy.

4. That children, with the consent of their parents, in presence of witnesses, may be admitted.

5. That stinted measure be appointed for eating and drinking.

6. That their apparel be plain and decent, and that they wear a girdle.

7. That, next to God, they be obedient to their superior.

* 1 Cor., ix., 16. ; St. Luke xii., 47.

† Rodolph. Hospiniani de Monach. lib. iii., c. iii. This writer, from whom we have quoted, was a fierce Zuinglian ; but the extravagance of his theological views does not invalidate his accuracy as an historian.

8. Declares the good qualities which their superiors ought to have.

9. That the superior of the monastery first reprove the offenders with meekness and gentleness; but if they prove obstinate, and will not be reclaimed, then he is to account them as heathens and publicans.

10. That he suffer not the least offence to pass unreproved.

11. That they confess their faults to those who are the dispensers of holy mysteries.

12. That they should possess all things in common.

13. That men of estates render to their kindred what is their due, and the remainder to the poor.

14. That none that are entered return to their parents' houses, unless to give them instructions; and that is to be done by permission of their superiors.

15. That whosoever defames, or patiently hears his brother defamed, be excommunicated.

16. That no man do his own will in the monastery, or the least thing, without the superior's leave.

17. That they debar no man from entering into the convent upon trial, or give him any offence.

18. That the measure of eating and fasting be set by the superior.

19. That he who scorns to receive a garment,

when presented to him, ought not to receive it when he afterwards asks for it.

20. That those who by their own fault do not come to dinner at the fixed time, ought not to eat till the next day, at the same hour.

21. That none ought to give the least thing to the poor, but by the hands of those who are ordained for that office.

22. That they should be careful of the utensils appertaining to the monastery, no less than if they were the holy vessels belonging to the altar.

23. That they must apply themselves to handy crafts, that so they may be helpful to others.

24. That, as a token of humility, they wear sackcloth, and speak with moderation.

25. That the monks are not to discourse alone with women.

Besides these twenty-five chapters, there is another wholly monastic, but which appertains to him who is the director of the nuns :—

That when he confesses a nun, or a recluse, he ought to do so with decency, in the presence of the abbess.

These are St. Basil's monastic institutes, and these, with different modifications, formed the basis of the monastic rules by which our earliest monasteries were governed.

The monks, who were associated under these rules, were partly priests, and partly laymen. As an order, this flourished particularly in the east, where almost all those who lived in monasteries, or cells, followed the rules herein prescribed.

The most correct idea of the austerities attendant on the monastic life, may be formed from the description of it which St. Basil himself has given. In a letter which he wrote to St. Gregory Nazianzene, he states that the food of monastics consisted of bread and water, and herbs, and was limited to one meal a-day. He only allowed them to sleep till midnight, when they were to rise for prayer. "Cookery with us," said he, "is idle. No knife is familiar with blood; our daintiest meal is vegetables, with coarsest bread, and vapid wine." Nor was he averse to practise the austerities which he prescribed. In the account which St. Gregory gave of his friend, St. Basil, after his death, he says, that "he had but one inner and outer garment; his bed was the ground; little sleep; no bath; his food bread and salt; his drink the running stream." Such was the course of life pursued by St. Basil—a course which, while it vindicated him from being influenced by any unworthy motives in thus associating together men of like devotional feelings, ought to check that supercilious contempt, which is now-a-days too

often expressed for external mortifications; as though a truce had been proclaimed between the flesh and the spirit; and that Christians of the present day were exempt from "the law of their members warring against the law of their minds, and bringing them into captivity to the law of sin, which is in their members."* It is nothing to the purpose to urge that outward mortifications are sometimes made the substitute for inward holiness; they are unnaturally situated when thus placed in contra-position, and the argument which is hence brought against all kinds of self-mortification, is founded upon an abuse of an apostolical institution, and leads to conclusions as unwise as they are untrue.† The men who prescribed the discipline of the cloister, were men of unquestionable piety, and their extant remains show that they were, moreover, men of sound and discriminating judgment; therefore, instead of passing an unqualified censure on any of their institutions, we ought, at least, to respect their motives; while their trials and sufferings should reprove our love of self-indulgence, and lead us to follow their steps, were it but at an humble distance, instead of filling our minds with the conceited notion of our superior wisdom, in avoiding those austerities, which were of old employed in

* Rom. vii., 23.

† Rom. viii., 13; 1 Cor. ix., 27; Col. iii., 5.

subjecting the body, with its affections and lusts, to the regulating guidance of the mind.*

* "Alas! the evil desire of unlawful lust disquiets the mind of almost every living man. As the bee shall perish when she stings anything angrily, so shall every soul perish after unlawful lust, unless the man turn to good."—*Boeth. A.S. version*, c. xxxi., ii.

CHAPTER III.

GRADUAL PROGRESS OF THE MONASTIC SYSTEM. MONASTIC ORDERS.

"Monachism, consisting not in solitariness, but in austerities, prayers, retirement, and obedience, had nothing in it, so far, but what was perfectly Christian, and, under circumstances, exemplary; especially when viewed in its connexion with the relative duties, which were soon afterwards appropriated to it, of being almoner of the poor, educating the clergy, and defending the faith, as delivered unto us."

The Church of the Fathers.

From the east monastic institutions passed into the west, and in their progress, they first appeared in Italy, although it is very uncertain by whom they were originally introduced into that country. Some writers affirm that St. Athanasius brought them from Egypt into Italy, about A. D. 340, and was the first who built a monastery at Rome. Others assert that the first monastery erected in Italy was built at

Milan; while others no less confidently maintain, that the first society of Italian monks was formed at Aquileia; but none of the writers alluded to produce unexceptionable evidence in support of their opinions.* St. Martin, the celebrated Bishop of Tours erected the first monastery in Gaul, and recommended religious solitude with such power and efficacy, both by his instruction and his example, that his funeral is said to have been attended by no less than two thousand monks. From thence the monastic discipline gradually extended its progress through the other provinces and countries of Europe.

There was, however, a considerable difference with regard to the degree of austerity practised by the western and oriental monks. The former could never be brought to submit to the severe rules of discipline which the latter cheerfully endured. Nor is this difference a matter of surprise, when we consider the nature of the respective climates in which they dwelt.† The countries of the east have always been inhabited by a race of men possessing a warm and excitable temperament; which may, in no small

* Mabillon Pref., and Acta Sanctorum Ord. Bened. Muratori. Antiq. Ital. medii ævi. Fontaninus Hist. Liter. Aquil.

† It seems, from Macarius, Apophthegm, § 2, that the more enduring Egyptian monks lived almost without clothes winter and summer. The equal climate of Egypt would probably allow of this better than any other country.

degree, be attributed to the atmosphere of those regions, which is well calculated for producing an imaginative disposition. Besides, the bodies of those who are placed under a glowing firmament, and who breathe a sultry air, are better able to support a rigid and abstemious mode of living, than the inhabitants of a colder clime. It was, therefore, the monastic system, with considerable modifications, which was brought into Europe, although the principles, which were strictly observed, were amply sufficient to identify it with that system which had been instituted by Antony and others in the east.

The monastic orders were at first distributed into two distinct classes, one of which received the denomination of Cænobites; the other of Eremites, or Hermits. These names were derived from the general habits of the two classes; the Cænobites living together in a fixed habitation, and forming one large community, under the superintendence of a chief, whom they called father, or abbot—this word signifying father; while the Eremites continued to dwell in perfect seclusion, and pursued that course of life which first distinguished the ascetics from ordinary Christians. After the establishment of monasteries in this country, many Eremites, or Hermits,* con-

* These were also called Anchorites,—a word derived from the Greek word Ἀναχωρέω—to withdraw from society.

tinued to dwell in seclusion, and the memory of these devotees is not unfrequently preserved in the traditions of some of our rural districts, and in the names which the reverence of former ages gave to places which were considered to possess a certain degree of sanctity, from having been the abodes of such men.

Whether, however, they lived a solitary life, or whether they were associated in societies, they were in the constant habit of using such austerities and exercise, as were deemed requisite for the attainment of that spirituality of mind after which they sought. "Facito aliquid operis, ut te semper diabolus inveniat occupatum"—*i. e.*, always be employed, that the devil may find you busy, was the advice of St. Jerome to Rusticus,* when the latter was about to enter upon the monastic life; and, as idleness was always considered to be attended with no little danger to the inner man, certain hours were set apart in each day for manual labour, as well as reading, prayer, and other holy exercises.†

* Epist. ad. Rust. Monach., De vivendi formâ.

† "The Beginner of a Monastic Life," by Twisden, p. 15.

CHAPTER IV.

BRITISH MONKS. BANGOR. SLAUGHTER OF THE MONKS AT BANGOR. ST. PATRICK. AIDAN.

> "How beautiful your presence, how benign,
> Servants of God! who not a thought will share
> With the vain world; who, outwardly as bare
> As winter trees, yield no fallacious sign,
> That the firm soul is clothed with fruit divine!"
>
> *Wordsworth.*

THE early history of British monachism is involved in the same kind of uncertainty as that which hangs over its introduction on the continent of Europe. It appears, however, highly probable, that the monastic system was first introduced into these islands from France, and that it was brought here by the disciples of St. Martin.* The earliest monks in

* Historical Account of Church Government, by Lloyd, c. xii.

these islands, as well as elsewhere, appear to have formed themselves into societies, for the purpose of retirement from the world. In that retirement they spent a great part of their time in prayer, fasting, and spiritual exercise, and wrought at such works as were necessary for their sustenance: such as dressing their gardens, and providing meat, drink, and clothes. They afterwards left all common manual employment to those of their brethren who were fit for nothing else, and the better sort applied themselves to study, and especially to the study of the Scriptures. Hence, the monasteries at an early period, became "schools and seminaries of sound and useful learning," and from among those who had received their education in these places, the Bishops selected the ministers of the Church. The most eminent of these early British institutions was the monastery at Bangor, which according to Bede, was "furnished with learned men, at the coming of Augustine to England."*

Bangor was distant about ten or twelve miles from Chester; and Leland in his Itinerary, has described the site as "a place standing in a valley, and having the compass of a walled town, and two gates remaining half a mile distant from each other."† The vast extent of the site of this ruined monastery gives

* Eccl. Hist., lib 2., c. 2.
† Collect. vol. ii., p. 63.

a great degree of probability to Bede's statement, with regard to the number who formerly dwelt there. He affirmed that the number of monastics was reported to be so great, that when the monastery was divided into seven portions or colleges, each of these contained not less than three hundred men, who subsisted by the labour of their own hands.* Bangor has long been celebrated in our annals as the scene of a most sanguinary slaughter, which, through the mistake of some of our chroniclers, has been unjustly attributed to the disappointed ambition of Augustine, who was unable to compel Dinoth, and his monks, to conform to the fresh regulations which he had brought from Rome.

It is true that Augustine expressed himself in a threatening manner, when he said, "If the monks of Bangor would not have peace with their friends, they should have war with their enemies;" but the circumstances of the war, in which this threat seems to have been fulfilled, were such as to exonerate Augustine and his friends from having any participation in it. The invasion of Wales took place under Ethelfrith, King of Northumbria, who being a pagan could feel no interest in a religious controversy between christians; and who from his remote situation, was as little likely to be under the influence of Augustine; in

* Eccl. Hist., lib. 2. c. 2.

short, he was the chief of the only province in the nation, which refused to acknowledge the sovereignty of Ethelbert, the patron of Augustine.* The fact is, the unhappy monks of Bangor were slain simply because they were praying for the success of their friends, and the consequent destruction of their pagan enemies: and their massacre was followed by the destruction of the monastery.† It is said by some writers that Pelagius, who gave a name to the celebrated heresy which is called after him, was a lay monk of the monastery of Bangor, but the best authenticated accounts of the original foundation of Bangor, shews the impossibility of such a circumstance, because the monastery was not founded until many years after this heresiarch was dead. In the days of Pelagius, men were called monks at Rome, who had no office in the Church, but who retired from the common employment of the world, for the purpose of pursuing their studies and devotion; and when any number associated together, they formed what was called a monastery, although it was perfectly distinct in its nature from those institutions which were afterwards known by that name. Such appears to have been the "Monasterium Pinneti," mentioned by Ruffinus,‡ not far from Rome;

* Eccl. Hist., Bedœ, lib. 2, c. 5.

† Essay on the Welch Saints, by Rees. p. 294. ‡ Ruffin. Opusc., p. 9.

it is therefore highly probable, that Pelagius was a monk of this kind, and first disseminated his heresy in Italy.

Monachism was first carried over into Ireland by St. Patrick, who had spent many years previously under the discipline of St. German.* Among the monasteries which were founded in that island, there was a Bangor, which was probably a colony of the one to which allusion has been made. It seems, indeed, to have been the more populous of the two, if that be true which we read of Congal, who being Abbot there, and dying A. D. 601, had, at one time, 3000 monks under him!† In Laisrean's monastery, near Leighlin, there were fifteen hundred monks associated together, and yet it is by no means certain that there were not even more numerous societies in that kingdom, than those two which have been mentioned. Such was the high reputation of the Irish monasteries, that many of the first Saxon Christians went over to them for their education; and the nobility as well as commonalty of this isle were obliged to go over to Ireland for that education which the circumstances of Britain precluded her from affording to her sons.‡ This state of things continued until Oswald, King of Northumbria, procured Aidan to be consecrated as the bishop of his

* Origines Britannicæ, c. 4. † Warræus de Script. Hibern., lib. 1, c. 1.
‡ Eccl. Hist. Bedæ, l. 3, c. 27.

kingdom, and founded monasteries, from whence could proceed a sufficient supply of clergy.*

From Ireland monachism appears to have passed into Scotland, as St. Columba, by whom it was introduced, is said to have come from the former kingdom,† and, on his arrival in Scotland, to have been presented with the island known by the several names of Iona, Hy, and Icolmkill, where he founded a monastery, and soon afterwards succeeded in converting Brudius who at that time was king, as well as the whole of his nation, to Christianity.

It has been said, indeed, that Christianity was known in Scotland at a much earlier period than the times of Aidan and Columba; but the authority on which this rests, is so unsatisfactory, that it is much more probable that it is a fiction, than that such a fact should have been passed over in silence by the old chroniclers.‡

* Ibid, l. 3, c. 3. † Lloyd's Church Government, p. 87.

‡ The authority rests upon a statement of John of Fordun, a writer of the fourteenth century. See Church Government by Lloyd. c.7

RUINS OF LINDISFARNE.

CHAPTER V.

ANGLO SAXON MONKS. THEODORE. A MONASTIC VISION. ANGLO-SAXON MONASTERIES. WEREMOUTH AND JARROW. BENEDICT BISCOP. LINDISFARNE. ST. CUTHBERT. ALCUIN.

THE monastic system had obtained a firm footing in this kingdom when Theodore, a native of Tarsus, in Cilicia, was appointed by Pope Vitalian to the see of Canterbury. The appointment of a foreigner to so

important a situation, as that of primate of this island, was naturally regarded with jealousy; but these feelings quickly disappeared, and were succeeded by those of affection and respect for the stranger-prelate. Theodore was accompanied by his friend Adrian, and as they passed through France, they remained some time in that country, and did not arrive here, until June, A.D. 669. Soon after his arrival Theodore made a visitation through the island, and was indefatigable in his endeavours to bring the Anglo-Saxon Church, into a strict conformity with that of Rome. He is also said to have established a school at Cricklade, about twenty miles from Oxford, from whence that university might be supplied with students. He also undertook the duties of a preceptor, and such was his success in instilling into the mind a desire for learning, that numbers flocked to receive his instructions; and he is hence regarded as the parent of our national literature. At this period, Britain is described by Bede as being in a particularly happy state, more so than it had ever been since the arrival of the Saxons.* The christian kings were then superior to the pagans, and over-awed the latter into tranquillity.

A. D. 673., Theodore convened a council at Hertford, which was attended either by the other bishops

* Bede. Eccl. Hist., lib. 4. c. 2.

or their proxies. The bishops being seated, Theodore opened the council with a short speech, in which he pressed them to act unanimously, and to enact proper measures for the security of the faith, and the maintenance of the discipline of the Church; that those points which have been decreed by the fathers, might be handed down to posterity without the least variation, and adhered to with a just deference and regard; that they should endeavour to promote charity and intercourse, and prevent as far as possible, divisions. Having thus expressed his own views, he put the question to each of the bishops, whether they were willing to stand by the ancient canons? To which they all answered in the affirmative. The archbishop then produced a book of canons, whether transcribed from the general councils, or whether drawn up by himself, is not certain. He fixed upon ten articles out of this book, and asked their consent to each of them.

In these canons, he was not unmindful of monastics. The third canon enacted, "that the Monasteries should not be disturbed in their temporal concerns, nor have their property wrested from them, by any of the bishops;" and the fourth enacted, "that the monks should not have the liberty to remove and ramble from one monastery to another, without leave from the abbot; but keep strictly to

the terms of their engagement."* These canons being agreed to, as well as the other eight, which did not refer to Monasteries, they were ordered to be written out, and received the several signatures of the bishops, who were present: the archbishop pronouncing degradation and excommunication upon those that should make any infraction upon them.

The rules which were adopted for the government of the British and early Anglo-Saxon Monasteries, were far from being uniform. The rules which St. Basil framed were frequently received, but not universally, since each abbot prescribed those rules which he deemed most suitable to the particular circumstances of the society over which he presided.† In this choice, however, they were frequently directed by a regard for those rules, which they had been accustomed to observe in the house in which they had been brought up. It does not appear that any inconvenience was experienced from the want of uniformity, because however they might differ in minor points, one principle pervaded them. The grand object of monastic institutions was never lost sight of, viz., that mutual assistance should be rendered, and that their youth should be trained in such holy and reverential obedience, as would fit them for

* Bede, Eccl. Hist., lib. 4, c. 5. Matth. West. Anno 673.
† Anglia Sacra, Pars ii p. 91,

the more sacred offices of religion, which many of them were destined to fill. They thus observed the hours set apart for prayer, and that course of worship which the Catholic Church prescribed. "Let each one study according to his strength," said St. Boniface, the Archbishop of Mentz, in a letter to certain monks, "to keep himself in chastity, to assist others in the common concerns of life, and to continue in brotherly love, until the time of our return *from hence*, according to the will of God: and then praising God together, let us give thanks to Him in all things."* The sanctity, which at a very early period, attached itself to the monastic profession, does not appear to have always proved a sure protection to the weaker sex, against the licentious lust of some of the Anglo-Saxon monarchs; and in this respect, Ethelbald, king of the Mercians, has attained an infamous celebrity, through the bold remonstrance which the prelate above referred to addressed to him; and from the same source we learn, that certain other monarchs were guilty of a similar violation of monastic chastity, and brought upon themselves the vengeance of an offended God.

In an age of simplicity, when institutions which were considered to be under the special protection of God, were thought to be avenged by Him, we can-

* St. Bonif. Mart. et Archiep. primi Mogunt. Epist. 17.

not be surprised that the inmates of the monastery, were believed to be occasionally favoured with supernatural visions, and that to such, a glimpse into futurity was vouchsafed. A singular vision of this kind is related by St. Boniface to have happened to a monk, who fell into a trance. The subject of the narrative thought that the fleshy veil was removed from him, and that he beheld, at one view, the different parts of the world, with their inhabitants, and that angels of great and illustrious splendour received him as he was departing from the body, so that he could not for their splendour look upon them as they sung, "O Lord rebuke me not in Thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy displeasure:"* with this song, however, they carried him into the air, and shewed him the world enveloped in flames, so that the whole universe would have been consumed, had not an angel with the cross of Christ repressed the flames. Wherever the cross was applied, from that part the flame retired. He also felt the effect of the heat, and was alarmed by fiery spirits, until an angel touched his head, as a token of protection. He related that during the time he was absent from the body, he beheld a greater number of souls quitting their bodies, and assembling where he was, than he had formerly believed to be in the world: and that

* Psalm 38, v. 1.

there was an immense crowd of good and bad angels contending for the departing souls the wicked grounding their claims on their accusations, and the good angels defending and excusing them. He then thought that all the sins which he had ever committed were personified, and that they all cried out against him. One cried out, I am thy lust, with which thou formerly lustedst unlawfully, and against the precepts of God: another, I am thy vain-glory, with which thou boastedst among men: another, I am a lie, with which thou sinnedst in lying: another I am an idle word, which thou idly spakest: another, I am thy sight, with which thou sinnedst by seeing unlawful things: another, I am contumacy and disobedience, with which thou wert erst disobedient to thy spiritual seniors: another, I am sloth and idleness in the pursuit of sacred studies: another, I am idle thought and useless care, in which thou didst but too much indulge, both in and out of the church: another, I am a spirit of slumber, with which being oppressed, thou didst tardily rise to praise God: another, I am an idle journey: another, I am negligence and carelessness, through which thou didst not apply thyself with proper diligence in sacred reading. Many other sins were likewise personified, of which he had been guilty, and which he had failed to acknowledge: many things also which he

did not before conceive appertained to sin, now loudly cried out against him. The Evil Spirit confirmed these accusations, and claimed the victim as their own. But a few virtues came to his assistance, which he had formerly performed, and these, like his vices, were personified. One said, I am obedience, which he showed towards his spiritual seniors: another, I am fasting, with which he chastened his body, contending against the lust of the flesh: another, I am pure prayer, which he poured forth in the sight of God: another, I am kindness to the weak, which he manifested towards the sick: another, I am a psalm, which he sung to God, making satisfaction for an idle word: and thus each virtue strove against the opposite vice, and by these means defended him. The virtues which thus rose up in his defence appeared to have attained a great increase of weight since they were performed. He described the misery of the wicked whom he beheld. "I saw" said he, "pits of fire, many of which were belching forth a horrible flame, and the earth bursting fires of dreadful flames flew, and the spirits of wretched men, in the form of swarthy birds, weeping and howling in the flame, and hissing in words with human voice, and bewailing their own deserts and present punishments, by degrees settled on the brink of the pits, and again fell into them." The short respite

from this pain was indicative of that future rest, which, in the judgment, God would vouchsafe unto them, but until then they were thus to suffer. He also heard the crying and groans of those beneath the earth, to whom the mercy of God would never be extended; but who would be tormented by the eternal flame. He, moreover, beheld the habitation of the righteous, in which a glorious multitude dwelt, who invited him to come and partake of their joy: and this place the angels declared was the famed paradise of God. There was also a fiery and pitchy river, bubbling and burning in a wonderful manner, and across it a piece of wood was placed, to serve as a bridge, over which those souls passed who did not falter; but some slipping from the wood, fell into the dark river, and were variously wet, but each was purified by the immersion. These were described as the souls of those who, for venial sins, required after their death, a further cleansing by the mercy of God, that they might be worthy to be presented to Him. The angels also pointed out beyond the river bright and beautiful walls, of immense length and breadth, which they described as the sacred city of the Heavenly Jerusalem, where the souls of the blest would enjoy perpetual felicity.

He was afterwards, by order of the angels re-

stored to his body; and he proved the truth and reality of his vision, according to St. Boniface, by indisputable signs.* Such, we may conclude, were the theological views of our early monastics, with regard to the soul; views which although showing symptoms of a departure from scriptural positions, were, nevertheless, perfectly distinct from the doctrine of modern Rome on this subject. Indeed, as it has been shown elsewhere,† the doctrine of the Anglo-Saxon Church, in general, was altogether at variance with the present teaching of Rome, and more consistent with the Primitive Church, than was the case at a subsequent period. It will not be amiss to mention, that at the time to which we are now referring, it was customary for monastics to make occasional pilgrimages; this however, was not done with that superstitious feeling which afterwards prompted individuals of ardent piety to undertake them, but it arose from a desire of abstracting themselves, as much as possible, from those cares, which necessarily occupied their minds in the discharge of their respective duties, that they might be enabled to realize that high spirituality of thought, to which monastic institutions were, not without reason, believed to be conducive. For this purpose, resort appears to have been made to the Church of St.

* S. Bonif. Epist. 21. † "Early English Church."

Peter, at Rome, as there that perfect quiet could be obtained, which perhaps, under similar circumstances, could no where else be found,* since when the superiors of the different religious houses were in residence, they were always accessible to their brethren.

Among the most eminent monastic institutions of this country, we may reckon Weremouth and Jarrow, which were the most ancient of any within the limits of the county of Durham, and at an early period ranked high.

Weremouth was dedicated to St. Peter, and Jarrow to St. Paul. Weremouth was founded A.D. 674, in the fourth year of the reign of Egfrid, King of Northumbria; and Jarrow was founded ten years later; both monasteries having for their founder Benedict Biscop, a monk, whose history has been handed down to us by the pen of Bede. This Benedict Biscop, who was in process of time canonized, and who deserves to be gratefully remembered among the benefactors of our nation, was the person to whom Bede was entrusted when a child; and had it not been for him, we should probably not have been aware how greatly we are indebted to Benedict. To him we are indeed indebted for having provided his monasteries with those literary treasures, (in his days beyond all price), without which Bede would have had no means of instruction.

* S. Bonif. Epist. 20.

Without those means, the talents of this wonderful man must have remained unimproved, and that large portion of the Anglo-Saxon history, which is derived from him, would have been lost. This eminent monastic was born in the household of Oswy, King of Northumbria, who gave him lands, suitable to his exalted rank; but at the age of five-and-twenty, he forsook his patron's court, and paid a visit to Rome; and afterwards devoting himself to ecclesiastical pursuits, became the founder of the Monasteries of Weremouth and Jarrow. When the youthful Bede was committed to the care of Benedict, he entrusted his charge to Ceolfrid the abbot of Jarrow, and from that monastery Bede never departed during the whole course of his long and meritorious life.

The latter days of Benedict, whom Bede must have regarded as something more than a spiritual father, were marked by circumstances likely to make a deep impression on a devout and gentle heart. Benedict was stricken with palsy. "All the lower members of his body were deprived of motion and life, and the upper parts, without which life could not continue, were reserved free for the exercise of his patience;"* or to use the quaint language of Fuller, "being struck beneath the girdle with the

* Cressy p. 453.

dead palsy, his soul retired into the upper room of his clay cottage."† In this state he lingered three years, the body being half dead, but the mind retaining its strength and serenity. To render the long hours of sleepless nights less wearisome, he used to have portions of Scripture read to him by one of his monks, selecting parts suited to his own sad condition, such for instance, as the story of Job's sufferings and patience. It was not possible for him to attend the quire; and when he grew weaker and was no longer able, without great exertion and pain, to go through the psalms in their appointed order, certain of the monks attended in his chamber, at canonical hours; and while they chanted the service he accompanied them orally as long as his strength sufficed, and when that failed he accompanied them in spirit. During the time that he lay in this feeble condition, Sigfrid his coadjutor in the management of Weremouth Monastery, was dying of some inward malady. They wished to have an interview, as well to consult concerning the affairs of the united monasteries, which they could no longer administer themselves, as to bid each other a last earthly adieu. Sigfrid, therefore, was carried in a coffin into the chamber where Benedict lay in his bed; he was placed on the bed beside him, with his

† Fuller's Worthies, vol. 2, p. 497.

head on the same pillow, and even then, such was the extreme debility of both, that they could not join their lips to give and receive the last kiss of Christian love, without assistance from the weeping beholders.* With Sigfrid's advice, and with the consent of all the monks of the two monasteries, Ceolfrid was appointed to preside over the united abbeys, after the death of Benedict. Indeed, the two foundations of Weremouth and Jarrow were so singularly connected in their early history, that, to use the expression of Simeon of Durham, they seem to have been one monastery built upon two sites. They are several times mentioned as *the Monastery* of St. Peter and St. Paul.

In constructing the Church at Weremouth, Benedict Biscop is said to have brought workmen from France, to build it after the Roman manner; and to have also sent into foreign parts for artificers, who were skilled in making glass, an art to which the inhabitants of Britain were previously strangers. Such, however, was the diligence with which he prosecuted his undertaking, that in less than a year after the foundations had been laid, the roof was put upon the building, and Divine service was performed within its walls. Jarrow, as has been observed, was founded ten years later, and during the progress of

* "Vindiciæ Ecclesiæ Anglicanæ," p. 72.

these foundations, Benedict Biscop made five journeys to Rome, an undertaking of no little magnitude in those days.

Weremouth is said to have suffered severely during the Danish incursions, and is supposed to have been destroyed about A. D. 867, in the irruption of Hinguar and Hubba. It was afterwards restored, but again destroyed by fire, in the inroad made by Malcolm, King of Scotland, A. D. 1070. Jarrow is said to have been destroyed by the Danes, A. D. 793, and having been rebuilt, was again destroyed, A. D. 1069, when William the Conqueror took his revenge upon the northern part of England. After the destruction of Weremouth by the Scotch, that monastery was partially restored by Walcher Bishop of Durham, but it was never completed. This prelate also placed Aldwin, together with two associates, Elfwy and Renfrid, at Jarrow; but after a few years, from some cause or other, they separated: Aldwin taking a few followers to Melros, in Scotland; Renfrid removing to Whitby; and Elfwy remaining with the first settlers at Jarrow. Aldwin and his brethren suffering much from the persecutions of Malcolm, King of Scotland, were, after many ineffectual letters and messages recalled, under a threat of excommunication by Walcher, who gave them for their residence the ruined monastery of St. Peter, Were-

mouth, In the year 1083, Bishop William de Carilepho, the successor of Walcher, carried that prelate's intention into effect, by removing the greater part of the monks both from Weremouth, and Jarrow to Durham, and he then appointed Aldwin the first prior of the new establishment. After this removal, Weremouth and Jarrow became only cells belonging to Durham, and continued such until the dissolution of religious houses.

The monastery of Lindisfarne has attained considerable celebrity among our early monastic establishments, it being founded A.D. 635, upon the arrival of St. Aidan out of Scotland, to introduce the truths of Christianity among the Northumbrians. On the arrival of St. Aidan, Oswald, King of Northumbria, gave him Lindisfarne, or Holy Island, which is situated off the coast of Northumberland; and here he founded an episcopal seat for himself, and the succeeding bishops of these northern parts, who had also a chapter, consisting of an abbot and monks. The bishopric was afterwards transferred to Durham, and the monastery eventually became a cell, subordinate to the Benedictine Priory of Durham. Although the importance of Lindisfarne was much impaired by the transfer of the episcopal and monastic authority from that island to Durham, yet its fame being indissolubly connected with the celebrity of St. Cuth-

bert, will be preserved from oblivion, so long as the records of piety and virtue continue to adorn our annals.

St. Cuthbert is said to have been first brought to a serious state of mind by the admonition of an infant, who seeing him indulging in sports with a crowd of other youths, came up to him, and rebuked his levity. The rebuke, however, was unheeded, until St. Cuthbert, observing the child shedding tears, and perceiving that he refused to be comforted by those around him, went up, and when he endeavoured to sooth him, the child addressed him according to his future dignity, and pointed out the inconsistency of his conduct. This reproof had such an effect upon his mind, that he immediately returned home, and his character became speedily changed. From this time, his conduct was marked by a readiness to attribute the various occurrences of his life to the special intervention of Divine Providence. But the circumstance which made the deepest impression on his mind, and appears to have been chiefly instrumental in determining his pursuits, was a vision which occurred to him when he was following the occupation of a shepherd. Being engaged in his vigils, while the other shepherds, who were his companions, were asleep, he thought he beheld the heavens open, and a band of celestial beings descend

to the earth, and, after a short delay, return again to heaven again with an illustrious soul. In the morning he learned that St. Aidan had died about the time he saw this vision, and concluding that it was the spirit of this holy man which he had seen ascending into heaven, he committed his sheep to the care of their owners, and determined to embrace the monastic life. Although Lindisfarne contained at that time many holy men, yet he was induced to assume the monastic habit at Melros, in consequence of the high reputation of Boisil; Eata, at that time, being Abbot of Melrose. St. Cuthbert was distinguished for his diligence in the discharge of the various duties with which he was entrusted, and on the death of Boisil, which occurred A.D. 661, was appointed prior of his abbey. In this office he unceasingly endeavoured, both by precept and example, to promote the interests of religion, and a love of holy things; not confining his labour within the walls of his monastery, but extending them as far his influence could reach. At length, when Eata was removed to preside over the Abbey at Lindisfarne, he persuaded St. Cuthbert to accompany him, and appointed him prior of his new establishment. Here his reputation soon attracted great crowds of those who were afflicted in mind, and diseased in body; and, it is said, that many

derived much benefit from their visit. St. Cuthbert's powers of abstinence were very remarkable; and he is believed to have passed three, and even four nights, in succession, in watching and prayer. After spending many years of usefulness at Lindisfarne, he was desirous of passing the remainder of his days secluded from all worldly occupations and anxieties. For this purpose, he retired to a small uninhabited place, called Farne, A.D. 676, which the tide separates from the mainland, but which, at low water, is approachable from the shore. To this place, which common belief had assigned to the undisputed possession of devils, St. Cuthbert betook himself, accompanied by the prayers of the abbot and his brethren. Having taken possession of this uninviting region, he constructed a chapel, and dwelling for himself; and at a little distance, he built a larger habitation, for the accommodation of such of his brethren who might visit him. During the years which he thus passed far from the dwellings of men, the reputation which he had previously obtained by his healing powers, was far from being diminished; and while numbers flocked to him from all parts, disclosing to him the various maladies, whether of mind or body, under which they were labouring, none departed from him without deriving benefit from their visit. Notwithstanding his volun-

tary withdrawal from Lindisfarne, and the society of his brethren, he still retained a very high opinion of the advantages of association within the walls of a monastery. "Deservedly," said he, "the life of monastics living in a society is to be admired, who in all things are subject to the orders of the abbot; at whose will all the seasons of watching, praying, fasting and working, are regulated; of whom I have known very many who have far exceeded my poor attainment, both in purity of mind, and in the excellency of prophetic grace: among these, Boisil, the servant of Christ, is venerable, and to be mentioned with all reverence; who formerly, being old, brought me up when a youth, in the Monastery of Melrose, and, in the course of his instruction, predicted, with prophetic truth, all those things which were about to befall me. One only thing remains of all his predictions which I would to God may never be fulfilled!" He made this remark, because the aforementioned servant of Christ, Boisil, had signified that he must undertake the episcopal office, the anticipation of which he dreaded with no small degree of anxiety. And when at length the period arrived for the fulfilment of this remaining prediction, and through the influence of King Ecgfrid and Archbishop Theodore, he was appointed to the bishopric of Lindisfarne, A.D. 685, he could not be persuaded

to relinquish his solitude, until the king, in person, accompanied by many other pious and influential men, succeeded in bringing him to the council at which his appointment had been decreed. And even then, he was with much difficulty compelled to undertake the high and responsible office of a bishop. When, however, he had yielded to the importunity of his friends, he adorned the episcopal office by an apostolical devotion to its duties; constantly, says his biographer, praying for the people who were committed to his care, drawing their minds to heavenly things, and encouraging them to follow his precept by the example which he set before them. He delivered the poor from the hand of the oppressor, and poured the balm of consolation into the broken or wounded heart; and, when he found it necessary, brought the careless to a godly sorrow. Among the crowds with whom it was now his duty to mix, he carefully observed the severity of the monastic life; and, in a word, his outward conduct ever bore a powerful evidence to the virtues of his heart.*

Having thus discharged the duties of his office during the space of two years, and feeling that his end was fast approaching, he determined to return to his solitary island, that his remaining hours might be spent in perfect repose. Thus died this holy man,

* Vita S. Cuthberti, Bedæ.

A. D. 687, whose life adorned the monastic habit, and exemplified, in lively colours, the system of which his character was at once the fruit and ornament. In him we see displayed the true designs of our early monastic establishments; we see a man early devoting himself to the service of God, forsaking earthly pursuits, that he might fit and prepare himself for heaven; not confining his care to his own preparation, but extending it to all whom he could influence; and when at length he was called to the highest office in the Church, the same anxiety for his Heavenly Master's interests marked his conduct, and has rendered him a worthy object of our veneration.

The Monastery of Lindisfarne attained a further celebrity from the circumstance of Ceolwolph, King of Northumbria, assuming the cowl there, having abdicated his throne, when Ethelbald, King of Mercia, ravaged his kingdom.* Before his abdication, however, he granted an exemption and immunity to all the religious houses and churches within his realm, from all public taxes, works and burdens, except only, as was always usual, the building of castles and bridges. Lindisfarne frequently suffered from the ravages of the Danes, as it was situated on that coast which afforded the greatest facility to these pirates for carrying on their plundering pursuits.

* Symeon Dunelmensi, p. 79.

One of these attacks was made during the episcopacy of Higbald, about A. D. 793, when the Danes not only pillaged, but destroyed the monastery, murdering the ecclesiastics as well as the other inhabitants. "Most dreadful lightning," says Symeon of Durham,* "and other prodigies are said to have portended the impending destruction of this place. A. D. 793, a fleet of pagans, from the northern parts arriving in Britain, and ranging along the coasts, plundered the same, and killed not only the cattle, but also the priests, and a number of the monks and nuns.

"On the 8th, of January,† they came to the Church of Lindisfarne, miserably plundered all places, overthrew the altars, and carried away all the treasures of the church. Some of the monks they slew, some they carried away captive, some they drowned in the sea, and others much afflicted and abused, they turned away naked: but," adds the indignant historian, "they went not unpunished, God avenging the injuries done to St. Cuthbert; for the following year, as they continued their depredations, their commander was slain, and soon after their whole fleet perished by storms. Many of them died in the sea, and such of them as reached the shore, were killed by the natives. Thus was the Church

* Symeon Dunelmensi, p 87. † Saxon Chronicle, in Anno.

of Lindisfarne spoiled, and stripped of its ornaments: but as the episcopal see still remained there, those monks who had escaped the cruelty of the barbarians, returned with religious zeal, and instantly set about repairing the damage which their buildings had sustained."

It was not a little consolation to the unfortunate monks of Lindisfarne, to receive a letter full of sympathy for them from Alcuin, who also exhorted them to that firmness and resolution of character which became men who were devoted to their Lord. "Ye who remain," said he, "stand like men, fight boldly, and defend the citadel of God." * In those times of danger, when the peaceful inmates of the monastery were so frequently the victims of Danish violence and rapacity, they required more than common comfort and consolation in their troubles; and this appears to have been vouchsafed: for notwithstanding the violence to which they were exposed, we do not find that any, on that account, renounced the monkish habit. The temptation, from a sense of personal danger, was great to do so; but devotion was the main-spring of the monastic life, and it appears to have been of that solid and abiding kind, which made its subjects more than conquerors. Alcuin to whom we have just alluded, was one of the brightest orna-

* B. Flacci Alcuini, Epist. 8.

ments of the eighth century, and his piety is embodied in those epistles which are still extant, and which were addressed to other monastic societies, besides that of Lindisfarne. The monks of Wearmouth, Jarrow, and York,* were all the objects of his warmest solicitude, and enjoyed the benefit of his paternal admonition. Nor did he limit his valuable advice, to those whom he almost regarded as his spiritual children; he also addressed the monarch on his throne, and urged him, by the responsibility of his office, to discharge his duties aright,—to be liberal in his bounty, to avoid covetousness and to be a pattern to all who beheld him.†

The human mind being ever fickle, and liable to be directed into whatever course passion might impel it, Alcuin was strenuous in his exhortations to the cultivation of that Christian love and firmness of purpose, which, as we have seen, he endeavoured to instil into the minds of the monks of Lindisfarne. In his epistle to the abbot and monks of Gothland,‡ he said, "Ever maintain among yourselves brotherly love, and unity in all Catholic peace, and true faith, and unfeigned humility. Carefully preserve obedience to your rulers, and remain in your several places, when you have devoted yourselves to God; and do not desert your monasteries, nor wander after

* Epist. v, vi, xiii, xlviii. † Epist. xi, xii. ‡ Epist. xciv.

worldly vanities. The time of this life is short, and the sufferings of this present world are not worthy to be compared to the glory that shall be revealed in us."* Such indeed, was the usual strain of his exhortations; but the extracts above given, are sufficient to indicate the spirituality of mind which influenced the rulers of the Church, even in times which are often inconsiderately called the dark ages.

* 1 Cor. vii. 29. Rom. viii. 18.

CHAPTER VI.

PROGRESS OF THE MONASTIC SYSTEM IN ENGLAND. WHITBY ABBEY. MEDESHAMPSTEAD.

> Loudest rolls the thunder's voice,
> Swiftest flies the wind's light breeze,
> Purest far are heaven's high joys,
> Firmest stands what heaven decrees.
>
> MENOLOGY.

THE seventh century was the period when the monastic system, which had been gradually growing up among the inhabitants of this kingdom, became consolidated. It then obtained such a powerful hold upon the affections of the people, as required a violent convulsion in after times to loosen. Besides the enlargement, by subsequent endowments, of those early monasteries, to which allusion has already been made, many of our most celebrated abbeys

date their origin from this century. Whitby Abbey, called by the Anglo-Saxons Streonesheale, and situated in the North Riding, and on the eastern coast of Yorkshire, was founded during this century by St Hilda, in consequence of a vow. She obtained the grant of a site for the purpose of founding a monastery, from Oswy, King of Northumbria:* and her foundation was designed for the reception of monks, as well as nuns. In those days, royalty did not despise the seclusion of the cloister, and accordingly we find that Ælfleda, the daughter of King Oswy, became a nun in St. Hilda's establishment. Among the monks who were admitted into this monastery, the name of Cædmon stands pre-eminent, since it is indissolubly united with the early literature of this country. His history, which is related by Bede,† is very remarkable, and is in accordance with the devout temper of an age, which referred everything mysterious to the special intervention of a superintending Providence.

According to Bede, Cædmon was unversed in the art of poetry, being usually occupied with the domestic offices of the monastery, and he usually withdrew from his festive brethren, when he was called upon in his turn, to enliven the company with a song. On one of these occasions, he withdrew, and

* Bedæ Hist. Eccl., lib. iii, c. 24. † Ibid. lib. iv, c. 24.

having attended to the cattle, the care of which devolved upon him that night, he retired to rest; and in his sleep he was called by name, by some one, who standing near, commanded him to sing. On his expressing his inability to comply, he was again urged, when he said, "What must I sing?" "Sing me," said the stranger, "the origin of things." When he received this answer, he began to sing verses and words which he had never before heard, in praise of God the Creator; and on awaking, he recollected all which he had sung, and added many other verses to them. These were recorded by Bede, and afterwards translated into Anglo-Saxon, by King Alfred, and the work is now known as "Cædmon's Metrical Paraphrase of parts of the Holy Scriptures."

St. Hilda died in the year 680,* in the 66th of her age, and was succeeded in the Abbacy by Ælfleda, whom she had previously admitted as a nun.†

The Monastery of Medeshampsted, afterwards known by the name of Peterborough, was also founded during this century; having been com-

* Saxon Chron. Anno. DCLXXX.

† Numerous specimens of the cornu ammonis are found at Whitby, and in the neighbourhood, and as they resemble snakes coiled up, and covered with a crust of stone, superstition has described them as real snakes, which were converted into stone by the prayers of St. Hilda.

menced by Peada, King of Mercia, about A. D. 656, and completed by his brothers Wulfere and Ethelred, together with his sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, who, when they had completed the edifice, dedicated it to St. Peter, and granted large possessions, privileges, and immunities to the monastery. The records of our early history being very interesting, a somewhat lengthy extract from the Saxon chronicle is subjoined, relative to the endowment of Medeshampstead, which indicates, with tolerable accuracy, the religious feelings of our Anglo-Saxou forefathers.

"A. D. 656. This year was Peada slain, and Wulfere, son of Penda, succeeded to the kingdom of the Mercians. In his time, waxed Medeshampsted very rich, which his brother had begun. The king loved it much for the love of his brother, Peada, and for the love of his wed-brother,* Oswy, and for the love of Saxulf, the abbot. He said, therefore, that he would dignify and honour it by the counsel of his brothers, Ethelred and Merwal, and by the counsel of his sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, and by the counsel of the Archbishop, who was called Deusdedit; and by the counsel of all his peers, learned, and lewd,† that in his kingdom were. And he so did. Then sent the king after the abbot,

* A pledged or Christian brother. † Lay.

that he should immediately come to him, and he so did. Then said the king to the abbot, 'Beloved Saxulf, I have sent after thee for the good of my soul, and I will plainly tell thee for why. My brother Peada, and my beloved friend, Oswy, began a minster, for the love of Christ and St. Peter; but my brother, as Christ willed, is departed from this life: I will, therefore, entreat thee, beloved friend, that they earnestly proceed on their work; and I will find, thereto gold and silver, land and possessions, and all that thereto behoveth.' Then went the abbot home, and began to work. So he sped as Christ permitted him, so that in a few years was the minster ready. Then when the king heard say that, he was very glad, and bade them send through all the nation, after all his thanes, after the archbishop, and after bishops; and after his earls, and after all those that loved God; that they should come to him; and he fixed the day when men should hallow the minster. And when they were hallowing the minster, there was the king Wulfere, and his brother Ethelred, and his sisters Kyneburga and Kyneswitha; and the minster was hallowed by Archbishop Deusdedit of Canterbury, and the Bishop of Rochester, Ithamar: and the Bishop of London, who was called Wina; and the Bishop of the Mercians, whose name was Jeruman: and Bishop Tuda.

And there was Wilfrid, priest, that after was bishop; and there were all his thanes, that were in his kingdom. When the minster was hallowed, in the name St. Peter and St. Paul, and St. Andrew, then stood up the king before all his thanes, and said with a loud voice, 'Thanks be to the High Almighty God, for this worship that here is done; and I will this day glorify Christ and St. Peter, and I will that you all confirm my words. I, Wulfere, give to-day to St. Peter, and the abbot Saxulf, and the monks of the minster, these lands, and these waters, and meres, and fens, and wiers, and all the lands that thereabout lye, that are of my kingdom, freely, so that no man have there any ingress, but the abbot and the monks.'"

Here follows a description of the several lands, &c.

"Then quoth the king, 'It is little, this gift, but I will that they hold it so royally, and so freely, that there be taken therefrom neither gild nor gable, but for the monks alone. Thus I will free this minster, that it be not subject except to Rome alone: and hither I will that we seek St. Peter, all that to Rome cannot go.'"

During these words, the abbot desired that he would grant him his request. And the king granted it.

"'I have here,' said he, 'some good monks that would lead their life in retirement, if they wist where. Now here is an island that is called Ankerig; and I will request that we may there build a minster to the honour of St. Mary, that they may dwell there who will lead their lives in peace and tranquillity.'

"Then answered the king, and thus said, 'Beloved Saxulf, not that only which thou desirest, but all things that I know thou desirest in our Lord's behalf, so I approve and grant. And I bid thee, brother Ethelred, and my sisters Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, for the release of your souls, that ye be witnesses, and that you write it with your fingers. And I pray all that come after me, be they my sons, be they my brethren, or kings that come after me, that our gift may stand; as they would be partakers of the life everlasting, and as they would avoid everlasting punishment. Whoso lesseneth our gift, or the gift of other good men, may the heavenly porter lessen him in the kingdom of heaven; and whosoever advanceth it, may the heavenly porter advance him in the kingdom of heaven.'

"These are the witnesses that were there, and that subscribed it with their fingers on Christ's Cross, and confirmed it with their tongues. That was, first, the king, Wulfere, who confirmed it with his

word, and afterwards wrote with his finger on Christ's Cross, saying thus, 'I, Wulfere, king, in the presence of kings, and of earls, and of captains, and of thanes, the witnesses of my gift, before the archbishop Deusdedit, I confirm it with Christ's Cross',✠ 'And I, Oswy, King of the Northumbrians, the friend of this minster, and of the abbot, Saxulf, commend it with Christ's Cross.'✠ 'And I, Sighere, king, ratify it with Christ's Cross.'✠ 'And I, Sibbi, king, subscribe it with Christ's Cross.'✠ 'And I, Ethelred, the king's brother, granted the same with Christ's Cross.'✠ 'And we, the king's sisters, Kyneburga and Kyneswitha, approve it.' 'And I, Archbishop of Canterbury, Deusdedit, ratify it.'

"Then confirmed it all the others that were there with Christ's Cross,✠ namely, Ithamar, Bishop of Rochester; Wina, Bishop of London; Jeruman, Bishop of the Mercians; and Tuda, bishop, and Wilfrid, priest, who was afterwards bishop; and Eoppa, priest, whom the king, Wulfere sent to preach christianity in the Isle of Wight; and Saxulf, abbot, and Immine, alderman; and Edbert, alderman; and Herefrrth, alderman; and Wilbert, alderman; and Abo, alderman; Ethelbald, Brord, Wilbert, Edmund, Frethegis. These, and many others that were there, the king's most loyal subjects, confirmed it all.

"This charter was written after our Lord's nativity, DCLXIV., the seventh year of King Wulfere, the ninth year of Archbishop Deusdedit. Then they laid God's curse, and the curse of all saints, and all christian folks, on whosoever undid anything that there was done. 'So be it,' saith all. 'Amen.'

"When this thing was done, then sent the king to Rome, to the Pope Vitalianus, that then was, and desired that he would ratify with his writ and with his blessing all this aforesaid thing. And the pope then sent his writ, thus saying, 'I, Vitalianus, pope, grant thee, King Wulfere, and Deusdedit, archbishop, and abbot Saxulf, all the things that you desire. And I forbid that any king, or any man, have any ingress, but the abbot alone; nor shall he be subject to any man, but the Pope of Rome, and the Archbishop of Canterbury. If any one breaketh any thing of this, St. Peter, with his sword, destroy him. Whosoever holdeth it, St. Peter, with Heaven's key, undo him the kingdom of heaven.' Thus was the Minster of Medhamsted begun, that was afterwards called Peterborough."*

* Saxon Chron., edit. Ingram, p. 40, et seq.

CHAPTER VII.

VENERABLE BEDE. BEDE'S LETTER TO ECGBERT.

> "Record we, too, with just and faithful pen,
> That many hooded Cenobites there are,
> Who in their private cells have yet a care
> Of public quiet."
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THAT natural proneness to corruption, which is common to societies as well as individuals, began to manifest itself in some of our monasteries, in the eighth century, by the introduction of irregularities, which, if not checked, will undermine any institution, and bring ruin on any society which lends its countenance to them. In order to effectually remove these irregularities, and promote the general

welfare of the Anglo-Saxon Church, the venerable Bede came forward as a Church reformer. In the letter which he wrote to Ecgbert, Bishop of York, after giving him some pastoral advice, he suggests the propriety of erecting some new sees in the diocese of York, as suffragans to the Bishop of York, which, he conceived, would be advantageous to the Church. The best means of accomplishing this, he thought, would be by changing certain monasteries into bishops' sees; and lest any opposition should arise on the part of the monks, he suggested the propriety of granting these monks some concessions, and permitting them to choose the bishop out of their society; and the joint government of the monastery and diocese was to be put into his hands. If the alteration which would take place in the property of religious houses should render an increase in their revenues necessary, he assures Ecgbert that there are many places which are called monasteries, but which do not observe monastic rules, and from these he would have their revenues taken, by the authority of a synod, or transferred to the new dioceses. He also complained that the country was overstocked with these pretended monastic foundations; and that, in consequence, neither the sons of the nobles, nor warriors who had obtained their discharge from service, could find an estate on which

to live. He mentioned another abuse of still higher nature, which he affirmed had crept in; and this was, that some of the laity, who had neither taste for a monastic life, nor experience of its duties, used to purchase some of the crown lands, under the pretence of founding a monastery. They then obtained a charter of privileges, signed by the king, bishops, and temporal rulers, and by these, and other expedients, made themselves lords of several villages, and thus became discharged from every duty.

They, moreover, assumed the character of abbots, and governed the monks, if monks they could be called, without any just title so to do. In houses thus founded, the society consisted, for the most part, of monks who had been expelled from other monasteries, for misbehaviour, or else the founder persuaded his own retinue to receive the tonsure, and promise monastic obedience. In order to stop the growth of these disorders, and others of a similar kind, Bede recommended a synod to be convened, and a visitation to take place, so that all unqualified persons might be removed from their usurpations. In short, he puts the bishop in mind that it is part of the episcopal office to inspect monasteries, and that the state has nothing to do with these enquiries, unless the monks have committed a crime against it. "In this inspection, it is your province," says

he, "to take care that the devil does not gain the ascendancy in places consecrated to God; that we may not have discord instead of quietness, strife instead of piety, drunkenness instead of sobriety, and libertinism instead of purity."* In this letter, it is worthy of remark, that Bede reminds Ecgbert, that the discipline and reformation of monasteries belonged exclusively to the episcopal jurisdiction, and that the state had no power over them unless the monks trangressed against it. On this account he tells the bishop, that it is his duty to enquire into the state of monasteries, and to correct whatever is amiss.

Having had occasion to introduce to the reader's notice so distinguished a member of the Anglo-Saxon Church as the venerable Bede, it will not be irrelevant to give a further account of him. This celebrated man was born within the precincts of the monastery of Jarrow, A.D. 673, and he not only received his early education there, but also continued to reside there during the whole of his life, making such proficiency in almost every branch of learning, as to become the wonder of the age. He spent the whole of his time in study and devotion, and his last work is said to have been the translation of St. John's Gospel into the vernacular tongue, and that the last

* Ven. Bedæ Epist. ad Ecgbert. Antist.

sentence was finished just before he expired. One of his biographers says, "It is much easier to admire him in thought, than to do him justice in words." How great his reputation was abroad, may be inferred from the circumstance of Pope Sergius writing to Ceolfrid, the Abbot of Jarrow, and requesting him to send Bede to Rome.* This request, however, was not complied with, and Bede is said to have ended his days at his beloved monastery, A.D. 734,† and to have been buried there, from whence his body was afterwards removed to Durham, and placed in the same coffin with that of St. Cuthbert. The historian above quoted, says, that after the death of Bede, "History slept, and all notice of public transactions was in a manner buried. The English grew slothful and unlettered, and took no pains to attain the celebrity of their predecessors; and thus the inclination of posterity grew gradually cooler with respect to improvement, until they dwindled at last to a remarkable ignorance." The most celebrated of Bede's works is his Ecclesiastical History, which having been composed by him in Latin, received the high honour of being translated by King Alfred into Anglo-Saxon, both of which versions are still extant. To his literary

* Malmsb. de gest. Reg. Angl. L. 1, c. 3.
† Saxon Chronicle, Anno DCCXXXIV.

reputation, no doubt, the epithet of "venerable," which he received, may be attributed, although tradition would ascribe a more miraculous cause for it. It is said, his pupils being desirous of showing every respect for his memory after death, commissioned one of their number to write a rhyming epitaph for his tomb, after the custom of those times; and he accordingly wrote—

Hac sunt in fossa,
Bedæ.....ossa.

Having written thus far, and being unable to complete the last line, or to think of a suitable epithet, he fell asleep, and to his no less joy than astonishment, when he awoke, he found his verse filled up by an angelic hand, and standing thus,—

Hac sunt in fossa,
Bedæ venerabilis ossa.*

* *Here* in this grave *repose* the bones of venerable Bede.

GLASTONBURY ABBEY.

CHAPTER VIII.

PROGRESS OF THE MONASTIC SYSTEM UNDER DUNSTAN. DUNSTAN'S FIRST VISIT TO GLASTONBURY. HIS DREAM. EDGAR'S PROCLAMATION.

> But first, by many a stern and fiery blast,
> The world's rude furnace must thy blood refine,
> And many a gale of keenest woe be passed,
> Till every pulse beat true to airs divine.
>
> CHRISTIAN YEAR.

We are now arrived at that period in monastic history, when the system began to make a rapid progress in this country. The person who was mainly instrumental in effecting it was Dunstan, who is said

to have been born in the reigns of either Athelstan or Edward the elder. The chronology of this period being very imperfect, a good deal must necessarily be left to conjecture; but as the principal facts are ascertained, the precise year of their occurrence is a matter of secondary importance. The parents of Dunstan were named Herstan and Kynedrid, and ranked high among the nobility of Wessex. Their residence being in the neighbourhood of Glastonbury,* it is probable the religious associations connected with that place had a powerful effect in forming the mind of Dunstan. In consequence of the celebrity which Glastonbury had attained, it would naturally be the frequent subject of conversation among the neighbouring residents, especially if they were impressed with reverential feelings for those places which either traditionally or in reality, had been resorted to by men who were remarkable for their piety and learning. But besides the early impressions which were not improbably made upon the mind of Dunstan† by all the circumstances of this remarkable vicinity, there was another source from which a similar impulse might be given; and if we judge from the conduct of Dunstan, we shall be led

* Although Glastonbury was one of the early foundations, yet as its subsequent importance was owing to Dunstan, a detailed account of it will be given among the Benedictine monasteries.

† Vita S. Dunstani, Cott. Cleop. B. xiii, 4.

to imagine that they both contributed in giving that direction to his thoughts and feelings, which has procured for him so high a reputation among the benefactors of our monastic establishments. In the beginning of the tenth century, Fleury, situated on the banks of the Soire, in the duchy of Orleans, had obtained a splendid reputation as the chief seat of Benedictine discipline. This reputation was not confined to France, but was the talk and admiration of Europe. It is, therefore, not unlikely that the account of this celebrated monastery had reached the ears of Dunstan, when he accompanied his father to spend a night at Glastonbury; indeed, such must have been the case, in order to account for an occurrence, which otherwise could not have happened, without the intervention of a miracle; a power which is never exercised when secondary causes are amply sufficient to accomplish any of God's purposes.

Herstan appears to have been influenced in making this visit, by a devout wish to offer up his prayers on a spot so highly famed for sanctity: and he was desirous that his child should participate in the blessings which he trusted would result from his devotions.

If we form our opinion of the character of the child from the actions which developed the matured

views of the man, it will not require a very powerful effort of the fancy to suppose that Dunstan was a youth of thoughtful and imaginative mind, and that his visit to Glastonbury was associated with everything which was likely to make a strong impression on such a young and ardent temperament as we are justified in attributing to him. Few are unacquainted with those feelings which, in the morning of life, are called into existence by the prospect of beholding a person or a place, of which we have heard much, and for which we entertain sentiments of deep veneration. Such, then, we may be assured, would be the feelings of Dunstan, on approaching "The Glassy Isle;" and full of such feelings he would retire to rest on the night of his arrival at Glastonbury. During the night he had a remarkable dream. He thought an aged figure stood before him clothed in white, who conducted him in a majestic manner to those spots, the accounts of which had previously interested him. They were, however, now mere vacant spaces, with here and there a fragment of antiquity, which denoted the religious feelings of those early Christians, who had taken up their abode here. The scene, however, changed, and a splendid monastic pile appeared suited to the sanctity of Avalon. The contemporary biographer of Dunstan affirms that the plan

of the future Abbey of Glastonbury was revealed to the child, and that he actually beheld in his sleep that magnificent structure, which he was afterwards mainly instrumental in raising. Whether this were the case or not, we have no means of ascertaining; but its great improbability would lead us to discard it as one of those fictions which have had no slight tendency to bring the authenticated history of the middle ages into disrepute. Even the dream itself is unnecessary in accounting for Dunstan's attachment to Glastonbury, his early predilection for that place being confirmed by his education there; and when his education was completed, and it was determined that he should be a minister of the Church, he retired to his favourite abode, and there led the life of a religious recluse. During his seclusion, his mind and views were matured, and his intellect acquired that strength, which carried him triumphantly through all the difficulties which beset his path. When, however, he determined to assume the monastic habit, he did not assume it at Glastonbury, but proceeded to Fleury for that purpose, as this monastery was then celebrated for the excellency of its discipline, and was believed to possess the bones of Benedict, the founder of the rule which was there observed, his bones having been removed thither from his first monastery at Monte Cassino, in Italy.

After Dunstan had assumed the Benedictine habit, he returned to England, and was appointed chaplain to Edmund, who had succeeded his brother Athelstan on the throne ; an appointment which promised to open to him a way for the gratification of his early predilections, and the realization of his remarkable dream.

When Dunstan returned home, the monastery at Glastonbury had been reduced to ruins by the Danes; and he accordingly lost no time in persuading Edmund to repair the breaches which had been made. The new foundation was laid, and the buildings were erected from a model, which Dunstan is said to have brought with him from France ; and he is also said to have introduced from that country a society of Benedictine monks. In order that the lustre of the establishment might be increased, the king granted to Dunstan, whom he had appointed abbot, and to the monks who were under him, a new charter,* confirming all former ones, discharging them from certain burdens, duties, and contributions, and giving them power to receive fines, punish malefactors, and to enjoy all their lands and possessions as free from all claims as he enjoyed his own.

Under such patronage, it would appear that monachism was likely to flourish, and that the Benedic-

* Dated A. D. 944.

tine rule, which was introduced under such favourable auspices, would attain that ascendancy in England, which it had long enjoyed on the continent of Europe. Nor did the death of Edmund, and the accession of Edred to the throne, threaten to interrupt the increasing prosperity of the monastic bodies. The reign of the latter prince, however, was but of short duration, not exceeding nine years, and although he gave the warmest support, during his brief reign, to the schemes of Dunstan, yet his early death checked them as they were progressing towards their accomplishment; and the hostility of Edwy, his successor, which was partly provoked by the indiscretion of Dunstan, blighted all the hopes which had been fostered throughout the preceding reigns.*

Edwy deprived Dunstan of all his honours and emoluments, and condemned him to banishment; and, it is said, the royal vengeance went so far as to send pursuers after the exiled abbot, with a view of depriving him of his eye-sight, if they overtook him. He was, however, preserved from this violence, in consequence of having just embarked for Flanders, before the king's messengers reached the shore. Edwy, moreover, drove the monks from the monasteries of Glastonbury and Abingdon, where Dun-

* MS. Cleop. B. 13, 7.

stan had succeeded in introducing the Benedictine rule. Notwithstanding the violence of this persecution, it was not without some degree of alleviation, for Edgar Atheling, the brother of Edwy, having, on the death of Edred, succeeded to the government of Mercia,* when Edwy succeeded to the other parts of his dominions, this prince soon recalled Dunstan from his banishment, and conferred upon him, first, the see of Worcester, and afterwards that of London †; and when, on the death of Edwy, which occurred A. D. 959, Edgar succeeded to the throne of the entire kingdom, Dunstan was shortly afterwards appointed to the primacy of the Anglo-Saxons.‡ When Edgar was securely seated on his throne, he became the warm patron of the monastics, and gave his especial countenance to those who adopted the Benedictine rule. It is highly probable that the youthful monarch was under the guidance of the more experienced Dunstan; and this prelate would naturally use his influence for the benefit of his favourite rule.

The wisdom with which the king's councils were directed became evident in the national pros-

* Saxon Chronicle, anno DCCCCLV.

† MS. Cleop. b. 13, 7.

‡ In this account of his preferment, his MS. biography is followed; but in the account of the division of the kingdom, the Saxon Chronicle appears the best authority.

perity, and few monarchs have left behind them a more untarnished reputation. His attention to the religious affairs of his subjects appears to have been first aroused by the interposition of Divine Providence.

When he had been on the throne of the entire kingdom about two years, a dreadful pestilence raged throughout the island; but its effects were most severely felt in London. This visitation was not lost upon the young king; and having turned his own attention, and directed that of his legislature, to the spiritual condition of the kingdom, and the neglected affairs of the Church, he caused the following proclamation to be issued:—

"Here it is manifested in this writ, how King Edgar was enquiring what remedy he might effect in the pestilence that greatly harassed and reduced his people throughout his kingdom. This is then what he and his counsellors first thought, that this unfortunate state of things was earned by sins, and by disobedience to God's commandments; and especially by the withholding the bounden tribute which Christian men should pay to God in their tithe payments. He bethought and investigated the Divine course, by *comparing* it with that of the world. If any husbandman shall neglect his lord's tribute, and shall not pay it at the right appointed day, per-

haps the lord will be so merciful, that he will forgive him that neglect, and receive his tribute without punishing *him*. If he then frequently, through his officers, reminds him of his tribute, and he then hardeneth himself, and thinketh to hold out, the probability is, that his lord's anger will wax so great, that he will grant him neither goods nor life. So we may think that our Lord will do, through the boldness with which the people resist the frequent admonitions which our teachers have given about our Lord's bounden tribute; that is, our tithes and church-shot. Then command I, and the archbishop, that ye provoke not God, and that ye earn not the sudden death of this present life, nor especially the future eternal hell, by any withdrawing of God's rights: but that both the poor and rich, that have any tillage, should pay to God his tithes, with all joy, and with all affection, as the decree teaches, which my counsellors have decreed at Andover, and now again at Wihtbordestane with a pledge have confirmed. Moreover, I command my reeves, by my friendship, and by all that they possess, that they punish every one of those who do not perform this, and will break the pledge of my counsellors by any contempt, even as the aforesaid decree teaches: and in the punishment let there be no forgiveness. If he be so poor that he does either of these things,

either that he wastes God's goods to his soul's destruction, or turns them over more slowly in a grudging mood, than what he reckons for his own, then *let him know*, that that is most his own which lasts him for ever in eternity, if he willingly and joyfully will pay it. Then will I that God's rights stand everywhere alike in my dominions: and that God's servants, who receive the payment that we make to God, should live pure lives, and that, through their purity, they should plead with God for us. And I and my thanes will so rule our priests, even as our souls' pastors, that is, our bishops, teach us, that we may never be disobedient in any of those things that they, on God's account, teach us; and that we, through the obedience which we show to them for God, may earn the everlasting life to which they lead us by their doctrine, and by the example of good works.*

As might reasonably be expected, a monarch who was thus careful in preserving inviolate the patrimony of the Church, would himself be no inconsiderable a benefactor to it; and that his benefactions being under the direction of his chief counsellor, would naturally flow in that channel which was most conducive to the primate's views. Accordingly, during his brief reign, no fewer than forty-eight mo-

* MS. Nero. E. I, 130.

nasteries were founded by him. It is probable that some of these were ancient foundations, augmented and re-organized. How far this was the case we are not informed. It is well known, however, that in all these monasteries the new rule was introduced, and excited no small degree of jealousy and opposition, especially among the secular clergy. But the monarch having espoused the cause of the Benedictines, opposition was useless; and the comparatively defenceless state of the Church compelled her to submit with meekness in cases wherein a haughty thane would have resisted to the death.

CHAPTER IX.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED. OSWALD. ETHELWOLD. COUNCIL OF WINCHESTER. COUNCIL OF CALNE. ETHELRED. ÆLFGAR'S VISION.

"They give their best—O tenfold shame
On us, their fallen progeny,
Who sacrifice the blind and lame,
Who will not wake or fast with Thee!"

CRISTIAN YEAR.

In promoting the establishment of Benedictine monasteries in this country, Dunstan had an active and zealous co-operator in the person of Oswald, who through his friendship and interest, had been preferred to the see of Worcester. Oswald had not been long established in his see before he endeavoured to convert the cathedral of that diocese into a Benedictine monastery; but being thwarted in his

plans by the opposition which his scheme met with from the Chapter, he was determined to have his revenge. Accordingly, he founded a monastery in the neighbourhood, and introduced into it the Benedictine rule, hoping that the people in those parts would be led to draw invidious comparisons between the two rival institutions; nor was the expedient altogether unsuccessful. Numerous congregations attended upon the ministry of the monks, while the cathedral was nearly deserted. Pecuniary losses contributed to increase the mortification which was hence experienced; for many offerings were taken to the altar of the Benedictines, while few were presented in the cathedral. These losses, together with the increasing reputation of the newly-founded monastery began, at length, to operate upon the minds of the Chapter: and one of the senior canons, named Wensinus, a man much esteemed among his brethren, yielded to the wishes of Oswald, and was immediately sent by him to Ramsey, for instruction in the Benedictine discipline. Other canons followed the example of Wensinus, who having been recalled by his diocesan, was appointed prior of the monastery, which Oswald had succeeded in substituting for his Chapter.

Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, had indeed anticipated Oswald, by attempting a similar change

in his own cathedral, but meeting, with greater obstacles, he did not accomplish his purpose so speedily. These being the only cases recorded of such a change, during this reign, it may be presumed the other bishops were either indifferent, or even altogether opposed to the innovation. We must, however, recollect that Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald, were the most powerful prelates at that time, and being supported by royal authority, would generally bid defiance to resistance.

Through the means of these prelates, the reign of Edgar was marked by a succession of triumphs to the monastic party. The greatest of these was effected in the council, which assembled at Winchester, A. D. 968, at which Edgar presided in person. Dunstan and his friends brought heavy charges against the married clergy, and succeeded in procuring a decision against them. It is said, that the council being undetermined as to the course which ought to be adopted with regard to the secular clergy, a voice was heard from a crucifix against the wall, urging them to accede to the wishes of Dunstan; and that in consequence, a decree was made in conformity with those wishes. This story is mentioned not as possessing the least degree of credit, but as an instance of the fabulous accounts which were invented subsequently to the Conquest, and were after-

wards circulated for the purpose of bringing monasteries and their supporters into disrepute.

The success which thus crowned the endeavours of Dunstan and his party, was but short lived, for Edgar dying A. D. 975, i. e., seven years after the council had assembled at Winchester, the kingdom became the scene of great disorder; and the nobles taking advantage of it, expelled the monks from their newly acquired possessions, and reinstated their former proprietors. The country was in consequence agitated by angry debates, and no less harassing apprehensions. For the purpose of putting an end to these disquietudes, a council met at Calne, in Wiltshire, A. D. 978, in which the cause of the secular clergy, was warmly supported by Beornhelm, a Scottish prelate, who, on account of his commanding eloquence, had been requested to defend and maintain their interests in the council. During the sitting of the council, however, the well-known event of the floor giving way* occurring, it was interpreted as a Divine manifestation in favour of the monks, and at length contributed to secure their final triumph.

The youthful Edward, who had succeeded Edgar on the throne, died soon after, and for a time, the hopes of the monastic party were damped. But these difficulties served to consolidate the system, and pre-

* See "Early English Church." p. 240.

pared the way for its general prevalence. In consequence of the unnatural murder of a young and amiable monarch, the termination of his earthly career, was invested with the honours of martyrdom, and he has been since known in history, by the name of Edward the martyr.

In the year following the assassination of this young prince, Dunstan crowned his half-brother, Ethelred, although he was only eleven years of age. It is said, that Dunstan predicted the miseries which occurred during his reign; and which, from the utter incompetency manifested with regard to them, procured for their monarch, the ignominious surname of "*the Unready.*" The prediction here alluded to declared, that "as the sword had placed the crown on his brow, so it would never cease to shed misery over his reign." Although the archbishop died before Ethelred had attained the full age of manhood, he lived long enough to see the partial fulfilment of his ill-boding prediction. We learn from the Saxon Chronicle, that Dunstan died, A. D. 988, being, according to some writers, seventy years of age, and according to others, only sixty-four.*

* The difficulty of fixing his age, arises from the statement that he was born under Athelstan, who succeeded his father, Edward the Elder, A. D. 925; it, however, appears highly probable that there was some mistake as to the reign in which he was born, and that his age was at *least*, seventy. By fixing his birth during the reign of Edward, instead of Athelstan, the difficulty of reconciling his great eminence with his early youth, is removed.

The closing scene of Dunstan's eventful life, was rendered remarkable by a vision which his chaplain Ælfgar related, and to which, the previous sanctity of the prelate's life would have given a high degree of probability in a credulous age, even if such apparition had not been generally believed without a careful enquiry into their truth. At day-break, on the day of the Ascension, in the year in which Dunstan died, and three days before that event occurred, whilst Ælfgar was vigilantly keeping the sacred offices in the church of the Saviour, his mind being intent on heavenly contemplations, he was caught up on high, and in a wonderful vision he beheld St. Dunstan, arrayed in pontificals, and sitting on a throne, and dictating ecclesiastical laws to a clerk. Instantly he saw a multitude of angels rushing through all the gates of the church, in white garments, and wearing glittering golden crowns, proclaiming themselves cherubim and seraphim, and apparently bearing some divine command; and when they were arranged in order, they offered words of salutation saying, "Hail, our Dunstan! If thou art prepared to come to us, freely join our host." To whom Dunstan replied, "Ye know O blessed spirits, that Christ ascended this day into heaven, and we ought to pay this day's homage to so great a day, and to be present in our office with the people of God,

so that for this time I may not go with you." Then they said, "Be thou therefore prepared on the next Sabbath, to pass over with us, and before the Holy of Holies as a saint eternally to sing." To this he freely assented, and the heavenly visitants disappeared. Ælfgar kept all these things to himself, and determined silently to await the issue. But after the performance of Divine service, on the day of Ascension, in which Dunstan had taken his part, the archbishop solemnly announced to the people that he should be soon removed from them; and when he made this announcement, Ælfgar stepped forwards and declared the vision with which he had been favoured early that morning.*

In the progressive advancement of the Benedictine rule in England, we find two very different minds employed in the accomplishment of the object which they both had in view. Dunstan indeed had prepared the way for this popular system of monachism, but it required the patience and unwearied industry of Ethelwold to consolidate it. Hence in the account of his death, which is recorded in the Saxon Chronicle, Ethelwold is styled "The Father of Monks," as well as "The benevolent Bishop of Winchester." In this, as in every other case, we have a striking proof that Providence in the wise scheme of

* Gale Hist Eliensis, lib. 2. c. 14.

its administration, raises up instruments with powers commensurate to the work which they are called upon to perform, and fits them for bringing about the ends proposed.

S. Dunstan.

CHAPTER X.

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE BENEDICTINE RULE. ST. BENEDICT. EXTRACT FROM THE BENEDICTINE RULE.

> How shall a child of God fulfil,
> His vow to cleanse his soul from ill,
> And raise on high his baptism-light,
> Like Aaron's seed in ritual white,
> And holy-tempered Nazarite?
>
> LYRA APOSTOLICA.

THE monastic system underwent three reformations in this country, before it was firmly established. Previous to the first reformation, there appeared to be scarcely any definite rule of monastic discipline, since each monastery adopted its own; and the irregularities which hence arose, having drawn the attention of the hierachy to these institutions, a council was held at Cloveshoo, A. D. 747, by direction of Archbishop Cuthbert, for the purpose of investigating their regulations. In this council several regu-

lations were effected in the rules, as well as in the dress of monastics. The second reformation was accomplished by Dunstan, at the council which met at Winchester, A. D. 965, during the reign of Edgar: and the third took place under the direction of Lanfranc, who in the council held at London, A. D. 1075, carried into effect some of those regulations, which had been determined upon during the reign of Edgar, but which the circumstances of the times had kept in abeyance. The Benedictine Rule which the second of these reformations introduced into many monasteries, owed its origin to St. Benedict, a native of Nursia, in Italy, who in the fifth century became a kind of monastic patriarch. He was a warm admirer of the system as he found it existing in the east, and was anxious to bring it into favour in Europe. Being fully aware that eastern monachism must be considerably modified before it could be reasonably expected to be embraced by the inhabitants of a colder clime, he applied himself to the task; and while he maintained the general principles by which the orientals were guided, he succeeded in rendering them acceptable to Europeans. He founded a Monastery at Cassino, in Italy, and lived to see his exertions crowned with complete success. The rules which he framed, and which afterwards became very generally adopted, were intended to render the estab-

lishments which received them, regular and uniform. It was his desire that monastics should live a holy and a peaceful life, spending their time in prayers, reading, the education of youth, and other pious and learned labours.

The spirit by which St. Benedict was actuated, may be best illustrated by an extract from the prologue, and the fourth chapter of the Rule which he prescribed.

"Hear O my son, the precepts of a master; and incline the ear of thine heart; and cheerfully receive and effectually fulfil the admonitions of an affectionate father; that by the labour of obedience, thou mayest return to Him, from whom thou hast departed by the sloth of disobedience. To thee, therefore, my discourse is now directed—who renouncing the desires of self, and art about to serve as a soldier of the Lord Christ, the true King, dost assume the most powerful and noble arms of obedience. In the first place, thou must, with most urgent prayer, entreat that whatsoever good thing thou takest in hand, may through Him, be brought to completion; that He who hath condescended now to reckon us in the number of His sons, may not be obliged to grieve over our ill conduct. For He is ever to be served by us with those good things which are His own; so served by us, as that not only He may not, as an

angry father disinherit His sons,—but that He may not as a master who is to be feared, be so incensed by our sins, as to deliver over to eternal punishment, as most wicked servants, those who would not follow Him to glory.

"Let us, however, at length arise; for the Scripture arouses us, saying, 'That now it is high time to awake out of sleep;'* and our eyes being opened to the Divine light, let us hear with astonished ears the voice which every day admonishes us, 'To day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts;'† and again, 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit saith to the Churches;'‡ and what saith He? 'Come, ye children, hearken unto Me; I will teach you the fear of the Lord,'¶ 'Run while ye have the light of life, lest the darkness of death overtake you.'

"And the Lord, seeking for His workmen among the multitude of the people, whom He thus addresses, saith again, 'What man is he that desireth life, and will see good days?'§ And if when you hear this, you answer, 'I;' God saith unto you, 'If thou wilt have life, keep thy tongue from evil, and thy lips that they speak no guile. Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace and pursue it.'‖ And when

* Rom. xiii, 1. † Psalm xcv, 7 ‡ Rev. ii, 7, 11, 17, &c.
¶ Psalm xxxiv. 11. § Psalm xxxiv. 12. ‖ 1 Peter iii, 10, 11.

you shall have done this, 'My eyes are upon you, and My ears are towards your prayers;'* and before ye call upon Me I will say unto you, 'Here am I!' Most dear brethren, what is sweeter than the voice of the Lord inviting us? Behold in His mercy, the Lord points out to us the way of life.

"Our loins, therefore being girded, and our feet shod with faith and the observance of good works, let us, under the guidance of the Gospel, go forth in His ways, that we may be counted worthy to see Him, who hath called us in His kingdom. In the tabernacle of whose kingdom, if we desire to dwell, we can by no means attain our desire, except by running in the way of good works. But let us enquire of the Lord with the prophet, and say unto Him, 'Lord, who shall dwell in Thy tabernacle, and who shall rest in Thy Holy mountain?' After this enquiry, brethren, let us hear the Lord replying, and shewing us the way of His tabernacle, and saying, 'He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart; he that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbour, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbour:'† who turning away the eyes of his heart from the wicked devil who tempts him, and from his temptation, hath brought him to nought, and

* 1 Peter iii, 12. † Psalm xv. 1—3.

hath taken the young thoughts which he hath bred, and hath dashed them to pieces on Christ. Who fearing the Lord, are not puffed up by their good works; but who considering that those good things which are in them, could not be wrought by themselves, but by the Lord, magnify the Lord, who worketh in them, saying with the prophet, 'Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto Thy name give glory.' Like as the Apostle Paul reckoned nothing of his preaching, saying, 'By the grace of God I am what I am;'* and again he says, 'He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.†'

"Hence also it is, that our Lord saith in the Gospel, 'Whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house, and it fell not; for it was founded upon a rock.'‡ While the Lord does all this, He expects every day that we should respond to His holy admonitions, by our actions. Therefore, it is, that the days of this life are extended as a respite for the emendation of what is evil; as the Apostle says, 'Knowest thou not that the long suffering of God leadeth thee to repentance?'§ For the merciful God

* 1 Cor. xv., 10. † 1 Cor. i., 31. ‡ Matt. vii., 24, 25.
§ Rom. ii., 4.

hath said, "I desire not the death of a sinner, but that he should be converted and live.

When, therefore, my brethren, we enquire of the Lord, "Who shall abide in Thy tabernacle?" we then hear the rule of habitation, and if we fulfil the duty of an inhabitant, we shall be heirs of the kingdom of heaven. Therefore our hearts and bodies are to be prepared to go forth to the warfare of holy obedience to the commandments; and because it is impossible to our nature, let us ask the Lord of His grace, that He would assist us with His help. And if, flying from the pains of hell, we desire to obtain eternal life, while yet there is an opportunity, and we are in this body, and space is afforded to fulfil all these things by this life of light, we must now run and labour for that which shall profit us for ever.

We must, therefore, institute a school of service to the Lord; in which institution we trust that we shall appoint nothing harsh or burdensome. If, however, any thing a little severe should, on reasonable grounds of equity, be enjoined for the correction of vices, and the preservation of charity, do not in sudden alarm fly from the way of safety, which can only be begun by a narrow entrance. In the progress, however, of our conversation and faith, the heart being enlarged with the ineffable sweetness of love, we run the way of God's commandments, so

that never departing from His governance, remaining under His teaching in the monastery until death, we through patience are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that we may be counted worthy to be partakers of His kingdom." Although this rule contained a severer discipline than that which was enjoined by St. Basil, and appeared to go even beyond the requirements of the Gospel, yet we see an evangelical principle pervading it, and we cannot but acknowledge that its grand object was to establish such a system, as would enable its subjects to triumph over the corrupt passions of humanity, and to bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ.*

Dunstan modified the regulations which were prescribed by Benedict, and adapted them to the tastes and habits of his countrymen. There are many things which may be considered useful and conducive to eastern discipline, and which can, moreover, be observed without serious inconvenience in the genial clime of Italy, which would be intolerable under the chilling influence of a northern sky; such, therefore, Dunstan altered; and while he thus adapted the Benedictine rule to the circumstances in which he was placed, he was not unmindful of the essential principles on which the original rule was

* 2 Cor. x. 5.

founded. The reader must, therefore, bear in mind that the following sketch of the Benedictine regulations, refers expressly to that rule by which the Benedictine monasteries in England were established and governed.

The abbot, under this rule, was to preside over the monastery, and to call his monks to council when there was any important affair to be decided, and he was enjoined to adopt that advice which he deemed best. He was to be obeyed without any hesitation. Secret faults were to be declared to him, and if admonition and public reprehension were ineffectual in producing amendment, excommunication was to follow; and if the offender were still incorrigible, corporal chastisement was to be applied. For light faults the lesser excommunication was to be pronounced, or they were to eat alone after the others had finished their meal. For great faults, separation from the table, from public prayer, and from society, was enjoined; and neither themselves nor their food was to receive a benediction; and whoever joined, or spoke to them, was to be excommunicated. The abbot was to send some of the senior brethren to those who were thus situated, to persude them to humility and to make satisfaction.

The whole congregation were to pray for the incorrigible, and if their prayers were unsuccessful, they

were to proceed to expulsion. No person so expelled was to be received after the third expulsion. Silence was to prevail throughout the monastery, and every thing which might provoke laughter was to be avoided. No one was allowed to speak unasked, and the head and eyes were to be inclined downwards. The inmates of the monastery were to rise two hours after midnight for divine service, and every week the Psalter was to be sung through. All were to leave the church together at a sign from the abbot. Lamps were kept burning in their dormitories, and they were required to sleep clothed, with their girdles on. The habits and goods of the house were to be in the hands of proper officers, and the abbot was required to keep an account of them. No private property was allowed; and distribution was made according to every one's necessities. The monks were to serve weekly, and by turns, in the kitchen and at the table. Upon leaving their weekly service, both he that left and he that succeeded were to wash the feet of the others; and on Saturdays they were to clean all the plates belonging to the house, and resign them to the cellarer, who was to give them to him whose turn it was to serve. Those who thus served had an extra allowance of victuals, in order that they might wait upon the others cheerfully. The silence which reigned throughout the

monastery was unbroken during dinner, except by reading the Scriptures. They were read by a reader who was appointed for a week. There were to be two different dishes at dinner, together with fruit. One pound of bread was the daily allowance, and three quarters of a pint of wine. From Holy Rood day* to Lent they dined at nones ;† during Lent till Easter they dined at six; from Easter till Whitsuntide, and during the summer, they dined at Sext, *i. e.*, about noon, except on Wednesdays and Fridays, on which days they dined at nones. A collation, or spiritual lecture was to take place every night before night-song; and after night-song‡ silence was again observed. If any were tardy in attending church or table, they were punished by degradation, or by being deprived of part of their food.

When any were excommunicated, they were enjoined to prostrate themselves with their face to the ground, on the outside of the church-gate, when the monks went to prayer. The working hours of the monks were prescribed by their rule. They were to work from prime till ten o'clock, from Easter till the calends of October, *i. e.*, Holy Rood day; and from ten till twelve they were ordered to read. After refection or dinner, which during this season took place at twelve o'clock, *the meridian*, or *noon-*

* Sept. 14. † Three o'clock. ‡ The Even Service.

sleep, was allowed for those who chose; and after nones they were to labour till the even. From Holy Rood day till Lent, they were to read from prime till eight o'clock, then attend tierce,* and afterwards labour till nones.

After refection, reading and psalmody always followed. The monks were enjoined to observe particular abstinence during Lent, and at that time to maintain an especial gravity. When they were on a journey they were enjoined to say the services appointed for the canonical hours, wherever they happened to be. Strangers were to be received with a benediction, the kiss of peace, prostration, and washing their feet in imitation of Christ; after which they were led to prayers, and when the Scriptures had been read to them they were allowed to break their fast, unless it happened to be a high fast. No letter or presents were to be received without the abbot's leave.

Novices were to be tried before admission, and a year of probation was the appointed time. If approved, they were admitted by a petition laid upon the altar, and by prostration at the feet of all the monks. Priests who requested admission, were to be tried by delays; they were to sit near the abbot, but were not permitted to exercise sacerdotal func-

* Prayers at nine o'clock, or a little before.

tions without leave, or before they had conformed to the rule. Monks, when ordained priests, were to be subject to the rules and officers of their house; and if they refused to submit, they were to be expelled. Precedence was regulated according to the time of profession. The seniors were to call the juniors *brethren*, and the juniors were to call the seniors *nonnos*. The abbot was always to be styled *Dominus*, or *Pater*. When two monks met, the junior was to ask a benediction of the senior; and when he passed by, the junior was to rise and give him his seat, and not sit down again until he bade him.

The abbot was to be elected by the whole society, by a plurality of votes; his life and prudence being his only qualification. The prior was elected by the abbot, and was deposable for disobedience. The chief domestic was the porter, who was required to be a wise old man, able to give and receive an answer: he was to have a cell near the gate, and to have a junior for his companion. Water, a mill, a garden, an oven, and all other mechanical shops, were to be provided within the precincts of the monastery, in order that the monks might have no excuse for wandering abroad. When any of the monks were about to set out on a journey, they were to have the previous prayers of the house; and on their return they were to pray for pardon for any excesses of which

they had been guilty on the way. If the superior enjoined any thing which was impossible, it was to be humbly represented to him; and if he persisted in his requirements, the assistance of God was to be relied upon for the performance of it. No blows were permitted, and mutual obedience and subjection to the superior, was strictly observed.* Such were the principal regulations prescribed by Dunstan for the regulation of the Benedictine monasteries which had been founded in England; and these wholesome regulations, with some few distinctive differences, were observed by the other religious orders which may be considered as branches of the Benedictine tree.†

* Fosbroke, Brit. Monach. p. 109. † Codex Reg. S. Benedict. c. 63.

CHAPTER XI.

ÆLFRIC AND HIS TIMES.

"Alas! what good will come,
Though we our prayer obtain,
To bring old times triumphant home,
And heaven's lost sword regain?"

LYRA APOSTOLICA.

IN tracing the gradual development of monachism, from its eastern origin, until, in process of time, and by gradual advances, it became adopted and warmly embraced among the Anglo-Saxons, the importance of the system will be best illustrated by the example of one, who, having emerged from the cloister, not only shed a brilliant light over his own age, but has been held in high and deserved esteem by all succeeding generations. It is indeed to Ælfric that we

are indebted for a great portion of what is still extant of the early literature of this country: and it is principally through his remains that we are enabled to vindicate the Anglo-Saxon Church from the corruptions of Tridentine popery, and to show the correspondence which exists between the doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church, and the purest ages of still more remote antiquity, as well as between the doctrines of the Anglo-Saxon Church and our own, since the Reformation.

Ælfric warmly espoused monastic principles, and maintained that without obedience to the Benedictine rule, high ministerial qualifications were nearly hopeless. The extant remains of Ælfric prove him to have been unquestionably a man of profound and sober mind; and we may, therefore, justly presume that his advocacy of monastic principles rested upon the solid conviction that those principles were conducive to the best interests of religion, and of that literature which has ever been subservient to it. It was in the quiet recesses of the cloister that religion found a hallowed sanctuary during the prevalence of those storms which shed a blighting influence over the island, when the sword alone was deemed sufficient authority for transferring the crown from head to head; and when, even among those engaged in civil avocations, moral influence

was, but too often, superseded by physical force. Whatever, therefore, may have been the real characters of Dunstan, Ethelwold, and Oswald; however, they may have been influenced by ambitious, or even vindictive feelings, an unprejudiced consideration of the times in which they lived, and the evil days which succeeded them, will lead to the conclusion, that by the principles which they maintained with regard to the priesthood, and by the institutions which they founded, they rendered an essential service to their country; while it is at the same time to be regretted, that in the prosecution of their designs, their devotion to the monastic system carried them sometimes further than can be justified. Such, for instance, was the forcible removal of married priests to make way for the regular clergy. At the period, however, now under consideration, men's minds were not unfrequently urged by impetuosity to actions, which viewed at a distance, and under different circumstances, appear indefensible; we should, therefore, in estimating these, ever bear in mind, that actions which cannot be defended upon the principles of right, may be in some degree palliated by the difficulties which beset religion in a dark and turbulent age. Monasticism should not, then, be tried by such a standard as this, but by its general bearing and effect upon society, under very

peculiar circumstances; and this will show that the evils which ultimately were mixed up with monastic rules, were more than compensated by the advantages which flowed from the system, and of which we are in no small degree the ungrateful possessors. In thus bringing forward Ælfric, as an unimpeachable witness in favour of monachism among the Anglo-Saxons, it will not detract from the value of the evidence, if we introduce him more particularly to the reader.

Ælfric received the rudiments of his education under a master of but small attainments,* and completed it at Abingdon, in the monastery founded there by Ethelwold, to whom allusion has already been made, and afterwards followed that prelate to Winchester. Ethelmer, or Aylmer, Earl of Cornwall, having founded a monastery at Cerne, in Dorsetshire (A. D. 987), Ælfric was appointed to preside over it, at the recommendation of Elfege, Bishop of Winchester; from Cerne he was removed to St. Albans, where he presided as abbot. He then became Bishop of Wilton; and on the death of Archbishop Sigeric, A. D. 994, he was chosen to succeed him, and he continued to preside over the see of Canterbury until A. D. 1005.† Many of the pro-

* Prefat. Ælf. in Genes. Hept. Anglo-Sax., p. 1.

† Saxon Chron., anno DCCCC,XCIV. et M,V.

ductions of his pen are still extant, and prove how great a benefactor he was to the native literature of his country, and how earnest a maintainer of those theological views, which so widely distinguish the Anglo-Saxon Church from the modern Church of Rome.

Ælfric's works consist chiefly of an Anglo-Saxon Grammar and Dictionary, several homilies, and translations of the five books of Moses, and other parts of the Holy Scriptures. Several of his letters are also still in existence, and are far from being the least interesting portion of his remains. After his consecration, in a letter addressed to Wulfstan, Bishop of Sherburn, Ælfric says, "It becomes us bishops, that we should unclose that book-learning which our canons teach, and also the Book of Christ." To Bishop Wulfsin he wrote, "You often ought to address your clergy, and reprove their negligence, because, by their perversity, the statute of the canons, and the religious knowledge of the Holy Church, is almost destroyed." His anxiety to promote the religious welfare of his age will, perhaps, however, appear the strongest in his exhortation to the priesthood. "Priests," says he, "you ought to be well provided with books and apparel, as suit your condition. The mass-priest should, at least, have his missal, his singing-book, his reading-book,

his psalter, his hand-book, his penitential, and his numeral one. He ought to have his officiating garments, and to sing from sun-rise, with the nine intervals and nine readings. His sacramental cup should be of gold or silver, glass or tin, and not of earth, at least not of wood. The altar should be always clean, well clothed, and not defiled with dirt. There should be no mass without wine. Take care that you be better and wiser in your spiritual craft than worldly men are in theirs, that you may be fit teachers of true wisdom. The priest should preach rightly the true belief, read fit discourses, visit the sick, and baptize infants, and give unction when desired. No one should be a covetous trader, nor a plunderer, nor often drunk in wine houses, nor be proud or boastful, nor wear ostentatious girdles, nor be adorned with gold, but do honour to himself by his good morals. They should not be litigious or quarrelsome, or seditious, but pacify the contending. They should not carry arms, nor go to any fight, though some say that priests should carry weapons when necessity requires: yet the servant of God ought not to go to any war, or military exercise. Neither a wife nor a battle becomes them, if they will rightly obey God, and keep his laws, as becomes their state." His most important views.

however, are contained in the homily for Easter, and relate to the Holy Eucharist. In this homily he proposed to instruct the people in the meaning of this Holy Mystery; and after shewing that this Sacrament was typified by the Paschal Lamb under the Law, he thus proceeds with regard to the consecrated elements: "Some men are apt to argue with themselves in this manner: which way can a piece of bread, which is made of corn, and baked in the oven, be turned into the body of Christ? or how can the wine, which is nothing but the juice of the grape, be changed into the blood of our Lord? Is any form of consecration sufficient to produce so great an alteration? To those who make this objection my answer is,—some things are said of our Saviour by way of figure, and some literally. By the literal meaning we are informed that Christ was born of a Virgin; that He suffered a voluntary death, was buried, and rose again from the dead, as upon this day. All these are matters of fact, and truths which appear upon the *letter*. But then He is said to be bread, a lamb, and a lion, in a figurative and emblematical sense. For instance, He is said to be bread, because He is the life and support of men and angels. He is called a lamb for his innocence, and a lion for His strength and power, by which He

conquered the devil. But then if we speak strictly according to truth, nature, and propriety, Christ is neither bread, nor a lamb, nor a lion. Why, then, is the Holy Eucharist called the Body and the Blood of Christ, if it does not answer directly to the idea, and is not truly the same thing which it is called? Now the bread and wine, which are consecrated by the priest, represent one thing to the outward senses, and another to the inward apprehensions of the faithful. They seem to be bread and wine in colour, taste, and outward appearance; and yet, after consecration, they are really the Body and Blood of Christ, by virtue of the Divine and mystical force of the Sacrament."

That this is widely different from the doctrine of transubstantiation, is evident, from the illustration which follows:—

"A heathen child," continues the homily, "does not lose anything of its outward shape by the Sacrament of Baptism, though it is very much cleansed within. It is brought to the font full of sin and blemish by Adam's disobedience; and here the corruptions of nature, and the original defects are washed off, though the outward figure of the child remains the same. Thus, for instance, the holy baptismal water, which is called the spring of life, is of the same appearance, and equally subject to pu-

trefaction, with common water. But when, upon the priest's invocation, the Holy Spirit descends upon the water, it is then raised to a new force and effect. By virtue of this Sacramental quality it washes off the stains of the mind, and brings the inward man into a state of innocence. In this element there are two things observable. As to its real and physical nature, it is water subject to putrefaction; but then consider it in its mystic force and Sacramental dignity, and we shall perceive it has spiritual life and salvation in it. Thus, if we consider the Holy Eucharist in the nature of the elements, and as they appear to our senses, we shall then perceive it to be a *creature* liable to change and corruption; but if we look upon it with respect to its spiritual force and efficacy, we shall then discover a quality infinitely more noble than the first idea, and plainly perceive that it gives life and immortality to those who receive it with faith and due preparation." Again,—"The Apostle St. Paul, speaking of the Israelites, in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, has these words: 'I would not that ye should be ignorant how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea, and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual meat, and did all drink the same spiritual drink; for they drank of that spiritual rock

that followed them; and that rock was Christ.'* That rock from whence the water flowed was not Christ in a signification of nature and direct property, but it was a type and representation of Christ, who also made this gracious declaration to all the faithful: 'If any man thirst, let him come unto Me, and drink; he that believeth on Me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water.' 'But this He spake of the Spirit,' said the Evangelist, 'which they that believe on Him should receive.†' The Apostle St. Paul declares, 'The children of Israel eat the same spiritual meat, and drank the same spiritual drink, because the manna with which they were supported for forty years together, and the water which flowed from the rock, were a type of the Body and Blood of Christ, which are now daily offered in the Christian Church. That manna and water from the rock were the same which we now offer, not in a bodily, but in a spiritual sense.‡ To explain this, Christ, before His passion, consecrated the bread and wine into the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and said, 'This is My Body, and this is My Blood': and although His passion was not over when these words were pronounced, yet, by

* 1 Cor. x., 1—4.

† John vii., 37—39.

‡ Non corporaliter, sed spiritualiter.

a mystic efficacy and operation, he changed the bread into His Own Body, and the wine into His Blood; even as He had done in the wilderness before His incarnation, when he turned the manna into His flesh, and the water which flowed from the rock into His own blood."*

These expressions may possibly be supposed to sanction the unscriptural and irrational doctrine of transubstantiation; but this is not the meaning which Ælfric himself intended them to bear. His view, as nearly as possible, corresponded with the view which our branch of the Church still holds with regard to the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper, viz., that in that Holy Sacrament the Body and Blood of Christ are verily and indeed taken and received by the faithful. "This sacrifice of the Eucharist," said Ælfric, in one of his pastoral letters, "is not our Saviour's Body in which he suffered for us; nor His Blood which He shed upon our account: but it is made His Body and Blood spiritually, as the manna was which fell from the sky, and the water which flowed from the rock in the wilderness."

The canons which bear the name of Ælfric afford further arguments against the views and doctrines

* Collier 1, b. 3.

which are now held in the Church of Rome ; but none is, perhaps, stronger than the different degrees of authority with which the councils were regarded, —a difference which strikes at the very root of modern popery. The thirty-third canon mentions the four general councils of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon, and adds, that these four synods are to be regarded like the four Gospels ; and that, although there have been many councils held in later ages, these four are of the greatest authority.* The preference which is thus given to the four first councils, and making their authority superior to those of more recent date, is completely opposed to the doctrine of modern Rome. In the eleventh century, the Church of the six preceding centuries was not considered so safe a guide, when any variation occurred either in doctrine or discipline, as the primitive Church ; and, consequently, the decrees of the primitive Church possessed a greater authority than the decrees of the other ; but the Church of Rome, at the present day, submits as much to the decrees of the Council of Trent, as she does to those of the Council of Nice, and justifies herself in so doing by her claim to infallibility. This, however, was not the view which Ælfric and the Anglo-Saxon Church

* Spelman, p. 531.

held on these points; and their deference to antiquity, while it secured their own orthodoxy, serves to identify them with ourselves.* Thus was the purity and soundness of the faith preserved entire, through the instrumentality of one of the warmest supporters of monachism, at a period when corruptions were beginning to develope themselves in other branches of the Church.

* Collier, cent. xi.

CHAPTER XII.

AN INTERIOR VIEW OF THE MONASTIC LIFE. MONASTIC DISCIPLINE. MONASTIC THEOLOGY. BENEFICIAL INFLUENCE OF MONASTICISM.

"Nor doubt that golden cords
Of good works, mingling with the visions, raise
The soul to purer worlds: and *who* the line
Shall draw, the limits of the power define,
That even imperfect faith to man affords?"

WORDSWORTH.

AMONG the various errors into which we inconsiderately fall, there is, perhaps, scarcely one which is more deeply seated, or more widely spread, than the false view of the monastic life which is commonly entertained.

So strong is the prejudice on this subject, that few can be persuaded to look upon an ancient monk as anything better than a personification of all that is

sensual in our corrupt nature, and whose self-indulgence was the great business of his life, although it was concealed beneath the uninviting cloak of an austere discipline. Hypocrisy is considered to be the principal science which was pursued within the walls of the monastery; and that for many ages the real character of its inmates was kept a profound secret, which enabled them to rest like an incubus upon society, while they preyed upon its vitals!

The hours, however, which were spent in devotion, even allowing that devotion to be nothing but an empty form, an assumption against which we protest, at once contradict the charge of self-indulgence; for no one who had this in view, would select day-break and midnight as seasons for joining in public worship.

The monastic bell summoned the monks to their chapel at least seven times a day; and the usual hours of Divine service were at day-break, at nine o'clock, at twelve, at three, at six, at nine, and again at midnight. Although, in process of time, the service became corrupted by innovations, which were introduced into the Church, yet the worshippers cannot, with any degree of fairness, be charged with consulting their *self-indulgence* in these matters; and the regularity with which the service was performed must vindicate the system from the suspicion

of being hypocritical, even if some individuals, as might reasonably be expected out of so many, have scarcely been able to clear themselves from such a charge; since the system is not to be tried by the character of individuals, but by its general principles.

The diet of the monks was another austerity which, in these days, would not be submitted to even by the most indigent. Many persons regard fasting twice-a-week as a very great hardship, and it is rarely practised, even by those who are well-fed and fare sumptuously. If such be the case, and it can scarcely be denied, it must have been a severe trial and mortification to men who fared scantily at all times, and who never enjoyed a good, substantial meal, to endure the rigid and frequent fasts which the monastic discipline prescribed. The common opinion is, that the monkish dietary was the reverse of this; but the notion is groundless, and may be classed among our vulgar errors. It is merely founded upon the satirical writings of those who indulged their wit in lampooning the sober demeanour of the monastic life, and strengthened by the humourous fictions of some of our modern novelists. The truth is, the daily diet of the monastery was remarkably frugal.

In early times flesh meat was not permitted to be

eaten by the monks, and this prohibition appears to have continued as late as the thirteenth century,* and was only relaxed by a dispensation. Their usual food consisted of herbs, eggs, fish, cheese, bread, butter, and ale :† a diet which does not exactly accord with our ideas of indulgence.

Sometimes they were indulged with wine, but this was usually of their own making; and occasionally they were allowed to eat the flesh of birds; these, however, even in the later period of monastic establishments, appear to have formed no inconsiderable a portion of their festive entertainments.

The dress which the inmates of the monastery usually wore, had as little in it to excite pride, as their general mode of living had to foster gluttony. These deeply-rooted propensities of our corrupt nature were checked, and in a great measure suppressed by the strict and unbending rules of the cloister. Their dress, for the most part, consisted of a course long gown, generally black, with some ordinary under-garments, and beneath all occasionally a hair shirt, which must have been a source of constant cutaneous irritation and uneasiness. Indeed, the whole dress was extremely inconvenient to the wearer, and was a perpetual mortification.

* Matth. Paris. Append. p. 1094. Ed. 1684.

† Ælfrici Colloquium. M.S. Cott. Tib. A. 3, fo. 60.

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Their feet and legs were covered with a kind of boot; and their bald heads (for tonsure was an indispensable requisite in every candidate for the retirement of the cloister), were defended from the wet and cold by no better protection than a scapulary, which was usually suspended from the shoulder.*

Such were the dress and general mode of life which prevailed in the monastery; and probably this description may suggest the question, What persons could be induced to submit to so austere a discipline? Some were, undoubtedly, compelled to embrace it, but the greater part chose the monkish habit freely and deliberately: acting upon principle, and in conformity with those notions and doctrines which then prevailed. Such may, therefore, be said to have sought the retirement of the monastery with the utmost sincerity, and with the most unquestionable piety. The theology of those days taught, that man came into the world laden with a fearful burden of sin, and that it was not prudent to increase it; but that every means which could be devised, should be resorted to for the purpose of diminishing this hereditary debt. The monastic life offering the fairest promise of accomplishing so desirable an end, was

* It is said that the dress of the boys in Christ's Hospital is a close resemblance of the ancient monkish costume.

naturally resorted to. In those days an anxious desire was manifested to wash away all that natural corruption which was brought into the world, and after baptismal regeneration, to make a continual progress in holiness and virtue. This was to be accomplished by the subjugation of the passions, and nothing could be better calculated for effecting this object, than what was afforded in monastic institutions. They abounded with harsh and rigid duties, and, as it was supposed, furnished their inmates with a sufficient protection from any new temptation.

The continual offering up of the body and blood of Christ with prayer, though it was mixed with a mistaken belief, and supposed to be a propitiatory sacrifice, and not a commemoration, was yet an act by which the sufferings of Christ were openly set forth before the eyes of simple unenquiring faith; and before the invention of those blasphemous fables, which were called in to support the creed of a more corrupt age, it served to keep the attention of the devout to the true source of reconciliation between God and man.

With such a faith as this, no state of life could better accord than that which was passed within the walls of the monastery. The social duties were there but few. The members of those societies were

kept from the actual transgression of many of the commandments. They were free from the duties of parents, and were relieved from the obligations of sons. Having quitted the world they no longer owed love or justice to their neighbours; by vowing perpetual chastity, poverty and fasting, they thought themselves free from the obligations which are strictly personal; and, in short, they comprehended all their duties in thus devoting themselves to the unwearied worship of God. This being the case, the most pious persons in those times considered the monastic life to be the most perfect pattern of holy living, and that such perfection could no where else be attained. The high repute which, in consequence, the monastic life attained, while it attracted the devout to embrace it, and induced the wealthy to multiply such institutions, was productive of jealousy in the minds of the secular or parochial clergy, and was the source of those frequent bickerings and disputes which disturbed the peace of the Church. Notwithstanding, however, the jealousy which thus prevailed between the regular and secular clergy, the foundation of the greater part of our parish churches may be attributed to the influence of monasteries; and they, in return, were regarded as the parents of such churches as they had been the means of founding. We may here notice another advantage which

not only this kingdom, but also the whole of Europe, derived from monastic institutions, at a time when emperors and kings were rather actuated by passion, than guided by a sense of strict and impartial justice. The position which monasteries held at that period enabled them to second the papal interferences in secular affairs; and although this power was occasionally exercised tyranically, and became in consequence, eventually the source of its own destruction, yet it was undoubtedly the means of securing that popular liberty, which, while it is the boast and ornament of our own land, extends its blessings indirectly to other, and distant states*.

* The history of the reign of King John, and the proceedings which occurred during it, at once confirm the benefits which, in a constitutional point of view, we have derived from monasteries.

CHAPTER XIII.

MONASTIC OFFICERS. ABBOT. PRIOR. PRECENTOR. CELLARER. SENESCHALL. TREASURER. SACRISTAN. ALMONER. KITCHENER. INFIRMARER. PORTER. REFECTIONER. CHAMBERLAIN.

"Subservient still to moral purposes,
Auxiliar to divine."

WORDSWORTH.

Abbot.

THE chief among monastic officers was the Abbot; a term of Syriac origin, signifying father, and was anciently applied to all monks, but especially to those who were venerable for age or peculiar sanctity; and hence, in process of time, it was restricted in its application to the head of the establishment. The appointment of abbot was usually considered to be

vested in the king, although the Benedictine rule requires a previous election by the monks, and the power and authority which were thus conferred, were very great. The abbot was usually styled *the Lord Abbot*, or "by divine permission," or "by the grace of God, Abbot, &c." Besides the parliamentary honours to which certain abbots were entitled, they were sponsors to the children of the blood-royal. The state which the abbots maintained during the thirteenth, and following centuries, in their respective abbeys, was very great, and was more like regal magnificence than the daily life of those who had professed themselves dead to the world. Their secular tenures introduced them into a variety of incongruous offices, such as going to war, discharging the duties of itinerant justices, &c. The public dress of an abbot is said to have consisted of the episcopal ornaments; of the dalmatic, or seamless coat of Christ, signifying holy and immaculate piety, as well as that unity which Christ prescribed to his Church; of the mitre, which was emblematic of Christ, as head of the Church; of the crozier, which denoted the pastoral care; of the gloves, which because being occasionally worn or laid aside, typified the concealment of good works for the purpose of shunning vanity, and the demonstration of them for edification; of the ring, as Christ was the spouse of

the Church, and Scripture mysteries were to be sealed from unbelievers, and revealed to the Church; and of the sandals, because as the foot was neither covered nor naked, so the Gospel should neither be concealed, nor rest upon earthly benefits. The mitres worn by abbots appear to have been like those of bishops, although it is said the episcopal were gold, while those of abbots were silver gilt, but their parliamentary robes differed from the episcopal, inasmuch as they wore gowns, cassacks, and hoods. The great duty of an abbot was to set an example of obedience to the rule to which he belonged. The Abbot of Feversham* says, "The cheyf office and profession of an abbot is (as I have ever taken it) to lyve chaste and solytarilye, to be separate from the intromeddlynge of worldlye thinge, and to serve God quietlye, and to distribute his faculties in refreshing of poore indigent persons, to have a vigilant eigh to good order, and rule of his house, and the flock to him commytted in God." But the duties as well as virtues of a good abbot, will be amply shown by the following character of William, abbot of St. Albans: "Whenever he returned from a journey, he had all the poor brought to the gate to receive refection. Every day he attended the duties of the Chapter, and the greater mass; being present even on private

* John Shepey or Castelocke. Cleop. E. iv., 34.

days, he stimulated the others by his spirited chanting; and on the greater and simple feasts came to vespers, and to compline daily. He assisted indefatigably at matins of twelve lessons, by reading the lesson, singing the response, beginning "Te Deum," standing with those who stood according to their turns, and animating the whole choir by his example. He was always present mitred in the midst of the choir at the Mass of Commemoration of the Blessed Virgin, and on principal feasts always celebrated the mass at the great altar. On the double feasts he held the choir in his mitre *(chorum mitratus tenere)*, and on other days, standing in his stall, led the choir, and sang the whole service with spirit. When the convent was in copes, or albs, he sang his response in the mass, at the nod of the chanter. He always attended the unction of the sick, not far from his stall, about the middle of the choir; and performed the funeral service in his own person. He never professed a novice but at the great altar; attended all processions; especially those on Sundays, and never anticipated the hour when the convent was wont to eat. He lent effectual aid to the fabric of the church, and its buildings and ornaments. He studied books, preached in the chapter, and was kind to the scribes and their masters. In doubtful ordinances of his rule, as well as in Divine service,

he took the advice of his convent before he decided, while his affability and instruction were extended to all. He was always the first speaker in difficult cases, and fond of promoting hilarity."*

The account which has been handed down to us of Samson, Abbot of St. Edmunds' Bury Monastery, by a contemporary chronicler, throws much light upon the office itself, and the manner of election; for although the appointment was vested in the king, a sort of preliminary election was observed. During the abbacy of Hugh, the predecessor of Samson, the abbey revenues suffered much injury from the usurious demands of the Jews, and, therefore, on his death, the monks were desirous that an able ruler should be appointed, and they prayed that their wishes might be fulfilled. Samson had served in various offices, and, at the death of Abbot Hugh, was sub-sacristan of the monastery, and had discharged the duties of that office with great care and diligence; this provoked the jealousy of William, the sacristan, and he succeeded in raising a party against Samson. While the monks were discussing the various excellencies and defects of those who were mentioned as eligible successors to Hugh, if the king should allow them to recommend any of their

* Matth. Paris, p. 1064. Brit. Monach. p. 157.

own number for the appointment, they were unable to fix upon any one who was deemed unexceptionable. At length they were obliged to decide; for the king, Henry the Second, issued his mandate that the prior and twelve of the monks should appear before him to choose an abbot. Fearing that there might be some dispute in the royal presence, as to the names which they should submit to the king for his choice, it was determined that three men should be selected in the convent, whose names should be sealed up; and if the king did not permit the prior and monks to name members of their own monastery, the seal was not to be broken; but if he did allow them to make their own selection, the seal was to be broken, and the three names given to the king. The party accordingly set out, and, after a toilsome journey, found the king at Waltham, a manor belonging to the Bishop of Winchester. He graciously received them, and commanded them to give him the names of three members of their convent. They then turned aside, as if for the purpose of consultation, and having broken the seal, they found the names were those of Samson, the sub-sacristan, Roger, the cellarer, and Hugh, the assistant-prior: which they presented to the king, inverting the order in which they were written. The king, declaring that they were all strangers to him, ordered them to

name three others of their convent, when they fixed upon the prior, William the sacristan, and Dionysius, who were all present, and as each was named, he returned the compliment by naming another of the party. The king being still dissatisfied, commanded them to give in the names of three members of other monasteries, which they agreed to do, provided no one should be forced upon their monastery contrary to the will of those at home. They accordingly named Nicholas de Waringford, afterwards Abbot of Malmesbury ; Bertrand, afterwards Abbot of Chertsey ; and Herbert, Prior of St. Neots. The king then commanding three names to be withdrawn, the three last were removed. Afterwards the sacristan withdrew his own name, and at length Samson alone remained of all the candidates ; and, after some discussion, was presented to the king, by whom he was appointed, and having received the usual blessing from the Bishop of Winchester, he returned to his monastery, where he was received on Palm Sunday with the usual ceremonies and religious services. He soon afterwards commenced an investigation of the monastic property ; and by rectifying the abuses which had prevailed during the abbacy of his predecessor, in a short time he brought every thing into a train of great regularity. His motives, however,

were misrepresented, but on examination his conduct was approved.

Seven months had not elapsed after his election, when he received letters from Rome constituting him a judge; and although he had previously had no experience in such matters, yet he discharged his duties so discreetly, and with such integrity, that the only complaint which could be urged against his court was, that no bribery could pervert his judgment. Envy, however, assailed him, from the effects of which his friends endeavoured to guard him; but such were his manifold cares and anxieties, that had he foreseen them, he has been heard to say, he would have preferred the office of almoner of the monastery to that of abbot.

He was about forty-seven years of age when he was raised to the abbacy, and had scarcely a white hair in his head; but in the course of fourteen years after, his hair became as white as snow. Such was the effect of his cares and anxieties. He was a man of abstemious and active habits, and could never tolerate the presence of those who did not regard the truth, or were guilty of excess, or were fond of talking.

He preferred an active to a contemplative life; and was displeased when he heard of a prelate quitting his duties, and turning hermit. He had a great dis-

like to obsequious men and flatterers, saying that he "who strove to please all men, could please none." Frequently, however, coming in contact with such, he was obliged to tolerate their society, although he was not misled by their professions. He strove to be just in his friendships, neither showing favour to those who had been his early friends, nor rancour towards such as had maligned his character: but always, at the same time, returning kindnesses which had been shown towards him.

An anecdote is related of Samson which is illustrative of that period. Being requested by the Bishop of Ely to furnish some wood towards a building which he was erecting, he unwillingly consented, as he did not wish to offend the bishop. Samson, however, did not immediately perform his promise, and in consequence a messenger came to him from the bishop, requesting permission to take the promised timber from Elmswell, mistaking the name of the place, which ought to have been Elmsel, which was the name of a wood belonging to the abbot. The abbot was much astonished at this request, because there was no such timber as the bishop wanted at Elmswell. Richard, the abbot's forester, however, secretly informed him, that during the preceding week, the bishop's carpenter had been into the wood at Elmsel, and had marked the best trees. On which

the abbot, perceiving the mistake, said he was willing to gratify the bishop: but, on the following day, he sent his own carpenter into the wood at Elmsel, put a mark on the trees which had been previously marked, and gave orders for them to be cut down as speedily as possible. When the bishop found out the mistake into which his messenger had fallen, he sent him back to rectify the error; but by that time, all the trees had been cut down which the bishop wanted, and on which his carpenter had put his mark. "Thus," says the narrator, "art was cheated by art."*

Some years afterwards, it was discovered that the allowance made to the cellarer was insufficient to keep that officer out of debt; and Samson being previously dissatisfied, had threatened to take the office into his own hands, on account of the lax manner in which the duties of it had been discharged. It was said that too much feasting had been allowed, but then the question naturally arose, how this was to be reformed? The prior threw the blame on the cellarer, and the cellarer transferred it to the guest-master. When the abbot afterwards enquired whether any plan of reform had been devised, and the only reply was, that there had been no extravagance in the refectory, from whence the debt ought to

* Chron. Jocelin de Brakelond. p. 53. Camden ed.

have arisen, he said that as they were incapable of managing those affairs, he would take them into his own hands; and he accordingly removed the cellarer and guest-master, and appointed two monks as deputies, keeping a strict eye upon all they did. This, as might be expected, caused various opinions to be secretly expressed among the monks—some praising, and others blaming the abbot's conduct: and many wondered that the convent suffered their affairs to be so mixed up with those of the abbot, from which they had formerly been kept distinct. An attempt was afterwards made to re-establish this distinction, by celebrating with unwonted solemnity the anniversary of Abbot Robert, who first introduced the plan of keeping the abbot's affairs distinct from the monks. Samson did not take the hint; but he appointed the deputy-cellarer to the vacant offices, still keeping up his superintendence. Finding, at length, that this was displeasing to the monks, he ordered them to elect a cellarer and sub-cellarer, and withdrew his superintendence, assuring the convent before God and His Saints, that he had only been influenced by a wish to promote their welfare.

A dispute afterwards arose with regard to the election of a prior on the death of Robert, but the abbot succeeded in obtaining the election of one whom he deemed most competent for the office. It

appears from *Jocelin's Chronicle*, that Samson had much to contend with in the administration of his monastery; and although he does not always appear to have acted with discretion, in the contests he was obliged to sustain, yet he invariably seems to have been actuated by honest intentions. In their last sickness it was usual for abbots of piety to be carried into the chapter-house to receive discipline, and to absolve, and be absolved by the monks. The following is the form of absolution which was used on such occasions:—"Wherefore I seek absolution from you, as much as appertains to you, and benediction: and I absolve you from obedience to me, and give you my benediction." Those abbots who wished to practice a voluntary humiliation when they found their end approaching, put aside their splendour, and this is shewn when the effigy upon their tomb is only a simple monk.*

The next office in a monastery was that of the prior, which was only subordinate to that of the abbot himself. Inasmuch as both abbots and priors were the rulers of societies, the office has sometimes been regarded as identical. But the prior, whether he assisted in the government of a monastery, or whether he presided over a priory, was still subordinate to the abbot; because all priories were

* Gough's Sepulchr. Mon. Intro. i., clv.

subject to their respective abbeys. Consequently, the prior was a sort of vicegerent of the abbot, being invested with his authority in his absence, and acknowledging the headship of the abbot whenever he chose to visit the priory. Those priors who resided in a monastery with a presiding abbot, had the next rank to him in the choir, chapter, and refectory; and were, moreover, provided with an apartment for themselves, called the prior's lodgings; and were furnished with horses and servants. In the absence of the abbot the prior was to maintain the discipline of the abbey; in the exercise of which he was only limited as to deprivation. He could cast the delinquent into prison, but he could not expel him from the society. The office of sub-prior in abbeys was much the same as that of the prior in his absence; the sub-prior being in fact an assistant to him in the discharge of his various duties, and his representative whenever he was not present.

Precentor, or Chanter.

This office was next in rank to that of abbot and prior, and could only be filled by a monk who had been educated in the monastery from a child. It was his duty to correct all mistakes in the choral service, which was entirely at his disposal; to distribute the robes at festivals; and to write out the

tables of Divine service for the use of the monks, as the choral service formed a principal part of the Divine offices.

His place was in the middle of the choir, and he usually commenced the chant. His office, however, extended to other matters besides the direction and lead of the choral service. In the processions in the monastery nothing could be done without the precentor. On the principal anniversaries he gave directions to the cellarer three days before they were generally made known. At the decease of a monk his name was registered by this officer in the obituary. The archives were under his care; and, in short, he was the head librarian. During the service the precentor held in his hand a kind of musical instrument called a tabula. It is said this instrument was held in the hand, to represent literally the expression of the Psalmist, "Praise Him with the psaltery and harp."* It is also said, that the precentor held in his hand a silver staff during the service, in imitation of the staff held by the Israelites, who travelled to their own country, eating the Paschal Lamb.†

Cellarer.

The next officer in abbeys was the cellarer, who was entrusted with the general management of the

* Ps. cl., 3. † Brit. Monach. 181.

domestic affairs of the society. He had the care of every thing relating to the food of the monks, as well as the vessels of the cellar, kitchen, and refectory. He was required to be careful of the healthy, and to be especially so in attending to the food of the sick. In the discharge, however, of his office he was not allowed to do any thing of greater importance without the advice of the abbot or prior. Some of his duties were prescribed with singular minuteness, as for instance, he was to collect the spoons after dinner, and in so doing, he was to carry the abbot's in his right hand, and the rest in his left! He was also to take care that no one sat down before the abbot or prior. In the monastery at St. Edmunds' Bury, the cellarer held his court for the trial of thieves and robbers, and had power over the highways, so that no one could dig chalk or clay without permission.*

He was accustomed to summon the fullers of the town before him, that they might lend him cloths for the conveyance of his salt. Sometimes he prohibited them from the use of the waters, and took possession of any cloth which he might find there.

The manor of Suthrey, in Norfolk, with three fisheries, were appropriated to the cellarer. Under an agreement between Hugh, Abbot of St. Edmund's,

* Brit. Mon. 178.

and the men of Suthrey and Helengey, he was to pay at Easter, and at the feast of St. Edmund, half a mark for every thousand eels which they were accustomed to render yearly at Michaelmas, and in the first week of Lent.*

There was also a custom in that monastery for the cellarer to collect from the inhabitants of each house a penny in the beginning of August, which was called *rep. selver*. In the course of time, however, the cellarer forbore to make his demand upon the rich, and the other burgesses, seeing this exemption, openly contended that no one occupying his own house was liable to this payment; that they only ought to pay it who lived in a rented house. At length all seeking to enjoy this immunity, offered to pay a composition to the abbot, which was accepted. The cellarer of this monastery was also accustomed to receive a penny for each cow belonging to a townsman for pasturage, unless the cow was the property of the chaplain, or was depastured in a field belonging to the servants. This custom, however, led to much contention.† There were also many other privileges belonging to the office of cellarer, which gave him much influence both in the town and monastery.

* Regist. Pyncebec, fol. 161, v.

† Chron. Jocelin, de Brakelond, p. 73, Camden ed.

This officer was often a layman of rank, whose office it was to hold courts, transact the abbot's business with the king, by paying money into the exchequer, and performing other duties of a similar kind; in return for which, he had certain valuable fees, and privileges. There appears, however, to have been a seneschal of inferior dignity, whose office and emoluments are thus described in a charter belonging to the Abbey of Winchcombe. As long as he continued in office, he was to have the same commons in the hall as the cellarer, or even the abbot's chaplain. His servants were to fare the same as other servants. He had provender for two horses; the same allowance as for the cellarer's two horses. He had also a robe of clerk's cloth once a year, with lamb's fur for a super-tunick, and an allowance for his servant the same as the cellarer's servant. He had also 40s. sterling every year at Michaelmas. For this he was to hold their manorial courts twice a-year at least; attend to other business, and even go abroad, if required, upon affairs of the house: in which case, however, his expenses were allowed.

Treasurer, or Bursar.

"His exchequer was a little stone house, joining upon the coal-garth,* pertaining to the great kitchen,

* *i. e.* coal-yard.

a little distant from the dean's hall stairs. His office was to receive the rents of the estates belonging to the house, and all the other officers of the house gave in their accounts to him. He discharged all the servants' wages, and paid all the expenses and sums of money laid out upon any works appertaining to the abbey; or that the house was charged withal. His chamber was in the infirmary, and his meat was served from the great kitchen to his exchequer."†

Sometimes the duties of treasurer were discharged by the head cellarer, whose office, especially in small monasteries, was very similar; as he kept the general accounts of the expenditure of the abbey.

Sacristan.

It was the duty of the sacristan to uncover the altar after the Gospel had been read; to carry a lantern before the priest as he went from the altar to the lecturn, and after the collect, to put the text upon the altar, and to either ring the bell, or cause others to do it. He had the care of all the sacred vessels; prepared the host; provided the wine; and furnished wafers for the communicants. At the procession of the rogations, lest the way should be wet or dirty, the sacristan was to point out the way to the precentor, and the precentor in like manner was to point it out to the chapter.

† Davies.

The sacristan was to appoint a sub-sacristan, who was to keep the keys in his absence; and to see that there was no negligence in the time of ringing the bell. The sacristan and sub-sacristan were to sleep in the church,—a privilege which was allowed to no one else, without the order or leave of the abbot or prior. The sacristan was to take care that no nettles or weeds grew in the churchyard, and that no horse or other animal frequented it. He had from the granary a daily allowance for his palfrey; and was allowed, as well as his deputy, a solatium, or companion. The sacristan's chamber was in the dormitory, or dorter, and he had his meat served from the great kitchen.

In the order of St. Victor, the sacristan had a servant, called matricularius, a poor man from the almonry, who rang the bells, regulated the abbey clock, wakened the monks in the dormitory, opened and shut the church doors, and answered strangers who knocked at the church door. He assisted the sacristan in sweeping the church, cleaning the lamps, and other duties. He, as well as the sacristan, slept in the church, as did also a third man, whom the abbot appointed.*

* Du Cange. *v.* Matricularius.

Almoner.

This officer was to find mats in the choir, &c., to put under the feet of the monks, and others who joined in public worship; and he was also required to take care that the chapter-house, cloisters, parlours, and stairs of the dormitory, were furnished with mats. He was to find the necessaries for the maundy;† and at the rogation processions, two of his servants were to stand at the gate of the house, and give to every monk a staff made of box wood; and the same servants, with the porter or his man, were to go before the procession, that they might remove all impediments, and prevent the people from pressing upon them. He was to purchase annually at Christmas, cloth and shoes for widows, orphans, and especially clerks, and those whom he thought to stand most in need. He was not allowed to collect any thing; but if any thing were handed to him he might take it and devote it to alms. After dinner when the monks retired from the refectory, he was permitted to go round the tables, and to devote to alms the drink which remained.

† There are various opinions as to the etymology of this word. Minshew thinks that Maundy Thursday, *i. e.*, the day before Good Friday, is so called because our Lord on that day instituted the Eucharist, and *commanded* his Apostles to love one another; while others, with Spelman, derive the word from *mande*, a basket, answering to the Latin sportula, which contained alms to be given to the poor.

By the Norman Institutes, his office was to find out poor, sick, and infirm persons, and in so doing he was to have two assistant servants, who were to remove all women out of any house which he purposed entering, in order that he might have no interruption in consoling the sick, and ministering to their wants. When, however, the sick were females, one of the servants performed this office. In the disposition of his alms, he was always to give previous notice to the abbot or prior, and attend to their directions.

Kitchener.

This officer, as his name denotes, presided over the culinary department of the monastery. He had assistants, some of whom cooked for the the monks, and others for the rest of the household. He sat at meals on the prior's left hand, and gave the license to the reader, as well as that of dining and drinking. Another part of his office was to visit the sick every morning to see what they wanted, and to supply those wants.

Infirmarer.

The infirmarer had the care of the sick, and had a particular part of the monastery appropriated to him for their reception. It was his duty to administer all their meals, and to sprinkle holy water after

compline upon all their beds. Before matins he went round with a lantern to see if any who were able to rise, remained in bed; and he was required to proclaim all negligences to the chapter. He had two brethren to assist him in taking care of the sick. The abbot, with the consent of the chapter, was to appoint such a person infirmarer as might be able, in case of sudden accident, to receive the confession of the sick.

Porter.

The office of porter was for the most part committed to men of mature age and unblameable life.* The Benedictine porter had a deputy, who was never absent from his post, while his master conveyed a message to the cellarer. He only entered the kitchen, refectory, infirmary, and residence of the superior, to deliver a message when visitors came. He always slept at the gate, and had a horse, that as often as the cellarer and superior wished, he might attend their summons, and ride with them. He was allowed the service of a boy, who took the key, after curfew, to the cellarer's bed, and fetched it again in the morning. In some accounts, we find that as soon as the bell rang for compline, the porter locked the gates, and carried the keys to the

* Du Cange *v.* Porterius.

abbot. Of the Augustinian porter, Mr. Steevens gives us the following account:—

"Adjoining to the said gate (of Ossery) was a little cabin, or cell, for the janitor to lodge in, who, according to their rule, was to keep the gates for the most part shut, not to let any in without leave from the abbot; to have an eye to the young canons in their wanderings to and fro; to keep out lay-people and young women, especially men bearing weapons, or suspicious varlets, who not only came with an intent to filch, but also to pry into the actions of the canons, and so thereby take advantage to slander their conversation, and render them odious to the vulgar; he was also to receive poor people and pilgrims, with love, and in the name of God; not to let them abide long at the gate, to the disturbance of the quiet; but send them away with refreshment; for which purpose he had several loaves appointed by the cellarer, to be laid in his cell to distribute to them, especially on fasting days, when there was no offal meat from the refectory.*

The right of appointing the porter was sometimes reserved by the founder, in right of dominion, which porter, at the installation of every new prior, was to receive five shillings, or an ox. Du Cange mentions various porters, as one at the gate when the poor

* Steeven's Monach., ii., 120. Brit. Monach., 198.

applied for alms; the porter of the court, who was a lay-brother; the porter of the cloister, who was also a lay-brother; and whose office it was to prevent strangers from entering, and inspecting the retirement of the convent.* It, therefore, appears that there was a difference between the janitor or keeper of the gate, and portarius, or the porter, although the two officers are frequently confounded.

Refectioner

He was to take care that the cups and vessels which were used in the refectory were kept clean, and that the tables were wiped daily. He was required, out of his revenues, to provide cups, pots, tablecloths, mats, basins, double cloths, candlesticks, towels, and salt-cellars. He was to find rushes to lay on the floor of the refectory five times in a year. When bread was placed before any of the monks at table, he was to distribute the bread and cheese with his own hands. If the abbot dined in the refectory, he was required to cause basins, water, and a towel to be placed in the lavatory before dinner; and in the same manner in the refectory after dinner. The refectioner received the wines from the abbot's cellar as often as it was to be distributed in the convent, and he was required to measure it, if necessary.

* In voce porterius.

It was also his duty to rise from dinner, and to fill the cups which contained the charity;* in partaking of which he was allowed to exceed the others by one charity.

Chamberlain.

By the decrees of Lanfranc, he was to find every thing necessary for the clothes, bedding, cleanliness, and shaving of the monks. He was to find the glass for making and mending the dormitory windows: and once a year to have the dormitory swept, and the straw of the beds changed. Three times in the year, viz., at Easter, Christmas, and the Nativity of the Virgin Mary, he was required to provide baths for the refreshment of the monks' bodies. At the Maundy† on Holy Thursday, he was, with the assistance of the almoner and porter, to introduce the poor, and of these, the first were the necessitous parents of the monks, and afterwards the clerks and pilgrims; upon each of whom he bestowed threepence.

Davies says, "The Chamberlain's office was to provide stamyne, otherwise called linsey-wolsey, for sheets and shirts for the novices and monks, as they were not permitted to wear linen. He kept a tailor

* Wine given on festivals, anniversaries, &c.

† Maundies were distributed on other days besides the day preceding Good Friday, although that day is called Maundy Thursday.

daily at work in making socks of white woollen cloth, both whole and half socks, and making shirts and sheets of linsey-wolsey, in a shop underneath the exchequer. This tailor was one of the servants of the house. The chamber were he lay was in the dorter.*

These were the principal officers, to whom the various duties of the monastery were assigned. It would be superfluous to mention their assistants, who, although distinguished by particular names, had no peculiar duties besides those which appertain to the officers already enumerated. These assistants were rather in the capacity of servants, than officers of the house.

* Davies, p. 126.

CHAPTER XIV.

MONASTIC BUILDINGS. CHURCH. REFECTORY. CHAPTER-ROOM. DORMITORY. CLOISTER. INFIRMARY. GUEST-HALL. LOCUTORY. ALMORY. LIBRARY. SCRIPTORIUM. MISERICORD. SONG-SCHOOL. MINT. CELLS. GRANGES.

> Like some tall rock, with lichens gray,
> Seemed dimly huge the dark abbaye ;
> When Hawick he passed had curfew rung,
> Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung.
> The sound upon the fitful gale
> In solemn wise did rise and fail,
> Like that wild harp whose magic tone
> Is wakened by the winds alone:
> But when Melrose he reached, 'twas silence all;
> He meetly stabled his steed in stall,
> And sought the convent's lonely wall."
>
> LAY OF THE LAST MINSTREL.

HAVING enumerated the principal monastic officers, their habitations claim our next consideration. The remains which still adorn our landscapes bear ample

testimony to their ancient grandeur, and to the munificent piety of former times.

A low and sheltered site was usually chosen for an abbey, and the facility for procuring fish had no small influence in the selection. Although such situations do not appear to have been the best calculated for promoting health, there is something in those sequestered spots marking the former existence of an abbey, which harmonizes with a devout and contemplative frame of mind; and it is not taxing our imagination too much, if we suppose that this feeling operated upon our forefathers, and led them to found their abbeys in such places as would naturally contribute to promote the end which they had in view. It would be foreign to the object of these pages to take more than a passing glance at the architectural beauties of many of our monastic edifices. It will be sufficient to observe that the builders were most perfect masters of their craft, and that the most beautiful of our modern ecclesiastical structures are mainly indebted for their excellence to the mouldering remains of the middle ages.

In many of our monastic ruins we meet with perfect specimens of the solid, but not inelegant Norman style; in others the transition to the early English is exhibited; and in the latest buildings, the De-

corated style, with its chaste and flowing ornaments, prevailed. As far as architectural taste is concerned, none of the preceding centuries need blush on being compared with the sixteenth, and it is a fact now generally admitted, that the darkness which has long hung over this department of art is only just beginning to be dispersed.

Monastic buildings, like the temples of classical antiquity, were erected by the gifts of great men, by the alms of the people, and from the annual revenues of the nation, which were partially applied to this purpose. The Abbey of Vale Royal is said to have cost the king £32,000 sterling.

In pursuing our description of the various portions of an abbey, it may appear to be a deviation from our subject to introduce the architectural peculiarities of our ancient churches ; but as every monastery was provided with a church, and many of them were on a scale of great magnificence, as their neglected ruins abundantly indicate, it is necessary for the completion of our design, to give some account of those peculiarities which are not generally known ; and the paramount importance of the church in the monastic economy, gives that edifice a priority of claim, in detailing the different monastic buildings.

Church.

Most of the ancient churches, when considered complete, were built in the form of a cross, with a tower, lantern, or spire erected at the intersection. The interior space was usually thus divided: the space westward of the cross, and between the piers, is called the nave; the divisions outward of the piers are called the aisles; the space eastward of the cross is called the choir; and the part running north and south at the intersection is called the cross, or transept. The choir is separated from the nave by a screen, which is constructed either of wood or stone, above which the organ is now commonly placed. In cathedrals the choir does not generally extend to the eastern end of the building, but is terminated by the altar screen, beyond which is the Lady Chapel;* and this was also the case in the principal abbey churches.

The high altar, which terminated the eastern extremity of the choir, was considerably raised above the level of the floor of the choir, and was approached by steps. It was built of stone, and the authentic mark of such an altar is said to be its five crosses.†

The altar screen, which, being placed at the back of the altar, separated the choir from the Lady Cha-

* Rickman's Architecture. p. 39. † Brit. Monach., 279.

pel, was generally ornamented in a most elaborate manner, and was occasionally adorned with a painting relative to our Lord. Over the altar was placed the palla or pall, which was deemed highly efficacious in checking the progress of fires, from some miraculous property it was supposed to possess, and this was covered by a linen sheet termed the corporal. On the south side of the high altar were the seats for the officiating ministers to sit during some part of the service, and these which are called sedilia, are still to be seen in that position in many of our churches. Adjoining these sedilia was the piscina, or little cistern to receive the water in which the sacred vessels were washed, and which was hence conveyed through a small hole at the bottom into the foundation of the building. In other parts of the church there were frequently smaller altars, where masses were said for the dead; these were rarely attended, except by the priest and his assistant; therefore sedilia are very seldom found near these altars.

The lecturn was a desk on which portions of the Holy Scriptures were read, and it was frequently made in the form of an eagle, to designate St. John the Evangelist. Many of these are still remaining, and are used in parish churches as reading-desks. One of these ancient relics is preserved in the collegiate church of Southwell, and is rendered peculiarly

interesting from the story connected with it. The eagle is formed of molten brass, with expanded wings, and bears the following inscription: "Orate pro anima Radulphi Savage, et pro animabus omnium fidelium defunctorum;" *i. e.*, Pray for the soul of Ralph Savage, and for the souls of all the faithful who are dead. It originally belonged to the monastery at Newstead, and was fished up from the bottom of the lake at Newstead several years since.

On being sent to a brazier, to be cleaned and repaired, he discovered that the pedestal was hollow, and composed of several pieces. Unscrewing these, he drew forth a number of parchment deeds and grants appertaining to the abbey, and bearing the seals of Edward the Third and Henry the Eighth, which had been concealed, and ultimately sunk in the lake, by the monks, at the dissolution, in order to substantiate their right and title to their domains at some future day.*

The analogium was a reading desk, over which a gilt eagle was suspended, with expanded wings. The seats of those who sung in the choir consisted of two parts, which were denominated antica and postica. In the postica were the folding-seats which were raised when the singers were to stand. The folding part afforded a kind of seat, and from the

* Clarke's Hist. and Antiquities of Southwell Collegiate Church.

relief which it occasionally afforded, was called a misericord. The antica formed a kind of leaning stock, on which they reclined when the venia or pardon was to be sought: in seeking which, there were two kinds of genuflection, the greater and the less; the former require a very low inclination of the body, the latter required only the head and neck to be bent.

Thus the missal which was used in Oseney Abbey says, "Let them raise themselves, and lift their seats, and lie upon the forms, saying the Lord's Prayer."* To understand this, it is necessary to observe that the seniors only leaned upon the forms; the juniors and the boys lay prostrate upon the pavement opposite the stalls; for to be raised to a *form* (ad formam), the word for a stall, was a promotion.†

The organ was very different to the modern intrument of that name; and had all its pipes exposed. The organist was not an appointed officer, but one of the society, the whole being early trained in the practice of vocal and instrumental music. In the fourteenth century they were very general in abbeys; and in the middle of the following century, that at St. Albans was said to be the best in the kingdom.

* MS. Arch. A. Bodl., 73. † Brit. Monach. 281.

Lockers were small cavities in the wall, either at the east, or south-east end of the chancel, and they are occasionally to be found in village churches, which have escaped the ruthless visitation of modern churchwardens. The sacred vessels for the use of the high altar, the wine and water for the Eucharist, and the oil for unction and chrism, were kept in the locker.

Excubitoria, were apartments for persons who watched the whole night. In Lincoln Cathedral there is a chamber of timber, where the searchers* of the church used to lie, who observed the following custom:—When the church doors were shut, they tolled the greatest of our Lady's bells forty tolls; after which they retired to their chamber, and partook of the bread and beer which was allowed them; and then walked round and searched the church.†

Rood-lofts, were galleries which extended across the nave at the entrance of the chancel, or choir, in which were placed images of the crucifixion, and occasionally of St. Mary and St. John. Besides these, there were sometimes rows of saints, but not always. This gallery is commonly supported by a

* It is not clear why this searching was required, but it was probably for the protection of the edifice, and it is much to be regretted that a custom which was at any rate useful in this respect, has been discontinued.

† Peck's Desiderata Curiosa, lib. viii., 13.

cross beam, richly carved with foliage, and sometimes superbly gilt; and underneath runs a screen of beautiful open tabernacle work. Specimens of these galleries are still to be met with. At Gilden Morden, in Cambridgeshire, the rood-loft is very large and complete, having a double screen, forming two pews, about six feet square, on each side the passage to the chancel; the upper parts consist of light open gothic work of the fifteenth century; the lower part is painted with flowers, and figures of Edmund and Erkenwold, with their names and inscription added.*

The rood-loft at Flamborough, in Yorkshire, is also in a very perfect state. It is highly ornamented with tabernacle work, wrought in oak, which was formerly gilt, and contains fourteen niches, with fine canopies, and ten arches below filled with rich tracery.

Confessionals, as their name indicates, were places appropriated to the receiving confession, and pronouncing either absolution, or punishment according to the penitential discipline. At Gloucester the confessional is a large chair, by the side of a door. At the ruined abbey of Maig Adare, in Ireland, are stalls with oblong holes cut in them for confession. On each side of the altar, at Crewkerne, in Somer-

* Lyson's Cambridgeshire, p. 59.

setshire, is a door leading into a small room; the door by which the penitents entered for confession, has two swine carved over it, to signify their pollution, and that by which they returned has two angels, to signify their purity.*

Lady chapels, or retro-choirs, were usually situated between the eastern end of the choir, and the eastern extremity of the building; and were so called from being dedicated to the Virgin Mary. Sick and strange monks commonly sat in the retro-choir during the performance of Divine service. In the rule of the order of Victor of Paris, it is said, "Those who from sickness are in the retro-choir by licence, &c."†

Crypts are subterranean chapels, and are mostly Norman. There is much doubt as to their original use, and the difficulty is not likely to be elucidated by future discoveries; indeed, the further we recede from the times, as well as habits of our ancestors, the greater becomes the difficulty of explaining satisfactorily their views and customs. There are several valuable specimens of this portion of our early churches still in existence; that, however, under the the Church of St. Peter in the East, in Oxford, is perhaps the most celebrated. It is said to have

* Brit. Monach. 284. Collinson's Somersetshire, ii. 262.

† Brit. Mon. p. 284.

been built by St. Grymbald, whom Alfred invited to this country from France, and it is hence generally known by the name of "Grymbald's crypt." Upon this subject, as well as upon the origin and use of crypts, much useless controversy has been expended. There are also very fine crypts under York* and Winchester Cathedrals, and under Repton Church, in Derbyshire. Sancte bells were bells on the top of the chancel or choir, which were rung when the priest came to the expression in the service, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth," in order that all persons without might fall on their knees, in reverence of the host, then elevated. They then bowed the head, spread or elevated the hands, and said, "Salve, lux mundi, &c., Hail, light of the world," &c. Triforia were passages in the wall of the church along the nave, above the arches, which separate the nave from the aisles, and were used for the purpose of suspending from them tapestry, and similar ornaments, at festivals. They are still to be seen in most of our cathedrals. Stained glass was a very general ornament in monastic times, and was introduced into the cloisters and refectory as well as into the church. There is a fine specimen of this an-

* The crypt at York consists chiefly of the floor and foundation of the pillars and walls of Archbishop Thomas, the first Norman Primate's cathedral.

cient glass still in existence in Morley Church, Derbyshire. It was brought there from the neighbouring monastery of Dale, at the time of the dissolution. The glass consists of various legendary and other subjects, in small compartments, with inscriptions in text hand. Both the figures and inscriptions are mutilated, but the subject of several of them, which appear to have belonged to a connected series, may still be made out. They relate to a tradition, that on a dispute between the monks at Dale, or Depedale, and the keepers of the adjoining park of Stanley, the king granted to the monks as much land, as between two suns could be encircled with a plough, drawn by deer, which were to be caught from the park.

The stem of Jesse furnished a very favourite subject for the artists in stained glass, and if any apparently miraculous event happened to any one, within the knowledge of the designer of windows, it was immediately represented. A genealogical series of benefactors, together with the arms, &c. of those who presented windows, were common subjects. The Seven Sacraments of Rome, were also frequently pictured; and crowned heads, including the pope, were mingled with other subjects. It is said that those figures which have curled hair and forked beards, represent the Edwards,

Richard II., and Henry IV; while those which have crowns and sceptres, are Jewish kings, connected with some Scriptural history.*

The following characteristics generally distinguish the Saints:—

St. Peter, the keys and a triple cross; sometimes a church; St. Paul, a sword, or sometimes a book; Gabriel, a lily, a flower-pot-full of which is frequently placed between him and the Virgin Mary; St. John the Baptist, a long mantle, and long wand, surmounted by a small shaft, forming a cross: a lamb is generally at his feet, or imprest on a book in his hand. St. John the Evangelist, a chalice, with a dragon, or serpent issuing out of it; together with an open book. St. James the Great, a club and a saw; St. Thomas, a spear; St. Simon, a saw in a boat; St. Matthew, a fuller's club; St. James the Less, a pilgrim's staff, book, scrip, and hat, with an escallop shell upon it; St. Bartholomew, a knife; St. Philip, a crozier; St. Anthony, a rosary on his mantle, and a pig at his feet, with a bell round his neck; St. Nicholas, a boat with three or four naked infants in it; St. Margaret, treading on, or piercing a dragon with a cross; sometimes she holds a book, and sometimes wears a crown: St. Clare, holding the expositorium; St. Apollonia, a palm branch, and tooth; St. Barbara, a palm branch, and book, or tower

* Brit. Monach. 286.

where she was confined; St. Mary Magdalene, dishevelled hair, and a box of ointment; Mary Egyptiaca, her hair all round her; St. Elizabeth, St. John and the lamb at her feet; St. Anne, a book in her hand; St. Dorothy, a basket of fruit; St. Sebastian, pierced through with arrows; Edward the Confessor, crowned, a ring on his right hand, sometimes a spear; St. Edmund, an arrow; St. Ursula, a book and arrow; St. John of Beverley, pontifically habited, his right hand blessing, his left holding a cross; Thomas à Becket, a mitre and crozier, his hand elevated to give the benediction; St. Asaph, a bishop with a crozier, his hand elevated; St. Bridget, a book and crozier; St. Christopher, a gigantic figure crossing a river, with the infant Saviour on his shoulder; St. Stephen, a stone in his hand, and a book; Paul the Hermit, a long robe and string of beads; St. Lawrence, a book and gridiron; St. Michael, in armour, with a cross, or pair of scales; St. Francis, a friar's dress, with a figure half human; half a cross, from which issue lines to his heart, feet, and hands, for the five wounds of Christ: St. Crispin, at work in a shoemaker's shop; St. Catherine, her wheel, or a spear, with the point downwards.

Popes have the triple crown and anchor, or a triple cross, and a dove whispering in their ears. The Exaltation of the Cross is represented by a king kneel-

ing and worshipping the Cross, which is held by a person in heaven. The Invention of the Cross is represented by a cross being lifted out of a tomb amidst spectators. The eleven virgins are represented by young females crowned, and kneeling, and the seven sleepers by as many persons praying.*

The above are the principal subjects which formerly adorned the storied windows of British monasteries, and which are now partly preserved in some of our cathedral and parish churches. The light which is received through such windows has been justly termed, "a dim religious light," for few, we should imagine, are insensible to the effect which such light produces on a devotional mind. It seems to harmonise with the inner man, and while it softens and calms the temper, disposes the heart to receive those Divine impulses through which the Spirit operates. It is, therefore, not improbable that ornament and display were far from being the chief, or even primary objects in formerly filling the windows of churches and chapels with stained glass; but that a higher and more important end was accomplished, inasmuch as the heart of the devout was warmed and invigorated for devotional exercises, by those means which adorned and beautified their houses of prayer.

Encaustic pavements :—these pavements, which

* Brit. Monach. 286.

are commonly, though erroneously, called tasselated, were formed of tiles about four inches square, which, when arranged and connected, produced an effect which resembled the mosaic work of the Romans, although it was devoid of their simplicity and taste. At what period heraldic devices were introduced cannot be ascertained with precision; although it is probable that when they were carved, or painted upon escutcheons, or stained glass, the floors received them likewise as a new ornament. The arms of founders and benefactors were usually inserted in these tiles after the Norman conquest,* when many of the great abbeys employed kilns for preparing them, from which the conventual and their dependant parochial churches were supplied. Some have conjectured that the painted tiles were made by Italian artists settled in this country; and it has been thought that monks having acquired the art of painting and preparing them for the kiln, in the manner of porcelain, amused and occupied their leisure by designing and finishing them. Great delicacy, and considerable variety, although only two colours were generally used, are discernible in those tiles whose date coincides with the period in which this branch of encaustic painting had reached its highest perfection.

* Some few instances occurred before this period.

It should be remarked, that the use of these painted bricks was confined to consecrated places, almost without exception; and that all of them discovered since the Reformation, have been upon the sites of monasteries, or in churches connected with some monastery; and in the latter case there is often a strong tradition as to their removal from their original situation. Amongst tiles of later date, arms impaled and quartered, as well as scrolls, rebuses, and cyphers, are very frequent; and interspersed with other devices are single figures, such as gryphons, spread eagles, roses, fleurs-de-lis, &c., of common heraldic usage indeed, but not individually applied.*

It appears, that in some instances these tiles formed a kind of tesselated pavement, the middle representing a maze or labyrinth, about two feet in diameter, so curiously contrived, that any one following all the intricate windings of it, could not travel less than a mile before he got from one end to the other. These tiles or bricks were baked almost till they became vitrified, and consequently resist both damp and wear.

Actual tesselated pavements once existed. A MS. Anglo-Saxon glossary, cited by Junius, says, "Of this kind of work, mosaic in small dies, is little in

* Dallaway's Heraldic Enquirer, p. 107-109.

England. Howbeit I have seen of it a specimen upon church floors, before altars, as before the high altar at Westminster, though it be but gross."*

Such were the chief peculiarities of the churches and chapels connected with monasteries, which, in fact formed the principal features in the monastic pile. We shall, now, proceed to give some account of the secular portion of these venerable edifices.

Refectory.

The refectory, or large dining-hall, is described by Davies, as being wainscotted on the north and south sides, and on the west side had a long bench of stone, extending from the cellar door, to that of the pantry. Above the wainscot was a large picture of Christ, the Virgin Mary, and St. John: and this room was, moreover, generally adorned with a crucifix. "Let them hasten," said the rule of Fulgentius, "after they have washed their hands, to enter the refectory, saluting the Cross, with their faces towards the east." Within the door, on the left hand, was an almery, where stood the grace-cup, out of which the monks, after grace, drank round the table. The ewer and basin also stood there, in which the sub-prior washed his hands at the table of which

* Brit. Monach. 289.

he sat in chief. At the west end of the refectory was a loft above the cellar, to which there was access by stairs. There the monks dined together, the sub-prior sitting at the upper end of the table. At the south end of the high table, within a glass window frame, was an iron desk, ascended by stone steps, where one of the novices read a portion of Scripture, during dinner. At the east end was a neat table, over which was a wainscotted screen; here the novices used to dine and sup. Opposite the door leading from the refectory to the cloister, was the lavatory, where the monks washed their hands previously to entering the refectory. Adjoining the lavatory was a bell, to summon the monks to wash before dinner. This bell was usually rung at eleven o'clock. Certain Psalms* were sung before and after dinner, in which praise was offered to God for the food which he provided for his creatures. Indeed, the refectory was the scene of much devotion; and in the unquestionable accounts which have been handed down to us of monastic customs, we find so much which was conducive to spirituality of mind, that we cannot but regret the operation of that selfish policy which swept away, instead of correcting these important institutions.

The etiquette of dining was as follows among the

* Called "Psalmi Refectionum."

Gilbertine monks. The prior, or a person appointed by him, rung the bell; the monks then washed and wiped their hands, and entering the refectory, and bowing to the high table, stood till the prior came; or if he staid long, sat down. When he came they rose to him, and he bowed to them, and took his seat; after which he rung a bell, which continued while the fifty-first Psalm was singing. Then followed a short religious service by way of grace. The prior then gave the benediction to the reader, and at the end of the first verse, they uncovered the food, the prior beginning. The soup was then delivered round by the servants, and also two plates. No one wiped his knife with the cloth, unless he had first used his bread for this purpose. They took salt with their knives. If any thing was wanted, either the servant or cellarer furnished it, and both the bringer and receiver bowed. This custom of bowing was also observed by the prior, who when he sent anything to another, bowed to the messenger. If any fault were committed either by a guest or servant, the person offending begged pardon before the step, and he was permitted to return to his place, on a signal being given by the prior with his knife. When the plates and spoons were removed, the prior ordered the reading to conclude by what was called "Tu autem," and the reply of "Deo

gratias:" the reader then bowed; the remaining food was covered, the bell was again rung, the monks arose, a verse of a Psalm was sung; they then bowed and retired two and two, singing the Miserere.*

Chapter Room.

This room had three rows of stone benches, one above another, a reading-desk and bench, a place called the judgment in the middle, a seat for the abbot higher than the others, and a crucifix, to remind them, during their discipline, that their sufferings were as nothing in comparison with those of Christ. In this room delinquencies were tried, and punishment was inflicted. A monk reprimanded stood in the middle of the chapter, and after the definitive sentence was pronounced, he humbly bowed, and retired to his seat. A person sentenced to receive discipline was beaten, according to the Norman institutes, with one single twig over his shirt, clothed and prostrate, or naked sitting, with a rod, and applied, according to Piers Plowman, with no small degree of severity. After the chapter was ended, several monks usually staid behind to confess their faults, and for this purpose they used a general confession in these words, "I confess to the Lord, and you

* Brit. Monach. 303.

brother, that I have sinned in thought and deed, wherefore I beg you to pray for me." And the monks to whom this was addressed replied, "Almighty God, have mercy upon you."

Dormitory.

The dormitory* was that part of the monastery in which the monks slept. Every monk had a little chamber to himself, and each chamber had a window looking towards the chapter-room; the partitions between the chambers were wainscotted, and in each window was a desk to support their books. In some of the ancient orders, the abbot's bed was in the middle of the dormitory, near the wall; and he made a sound to raise the brethren in the morning.

The middle part of the dormitory was paved with fine tile stones, which extended the whole length. Several constitutions enact that the beds should be without curtains, and in these counterpanes, sheets, and pillows were not allowed! They were permitted to have blankets, as it was deemed improper for monks to sleep with naked legs. When they retired to the dormitory during the meridians, they lay down in their clothes. The order of St. Victor says, "In

* This was frequently abbreviated into *dorter*, or *dortour*.

the summer, at mid-day, any one who chooses may read in the dormitory, provided he does not make a noise in turning over the leaves. In that hour the brethren ought to lie in their clothes, and take care not to extend their feet outside the bed.*

The monks also dressed in the dormitory, as we find from the following direction of St. Victor: "Let the monks ascend," says he, "into the dormitory, and there preparing themselves, put on woollen tunicks above, small subtalares, or shoes not higher than the ancles, gloves, &c. &c."

As the monks were obliged to rise to attend matins and lauds, we might naturally expect they would retire early to their dormitory; and such was the case. All the members of the monastery, except the officers, were obliged to be in bed by eight o'clock: the officers did not retire until all was still and safe, and, therefore, no particular hour was prescribed for them.

Cloister.

The cloisters were a covered walk, consisting of four sides, in the middle of which was a green. They were erected near the church, and the rule of St. Benedict required the monks to spend much of their

* Du Cange, v. Meridiana.

time in this seclusion, instead of wandering abroad, a practice to which they had previously been much addicted. The form of the cloisters was square, that hence the monks might feel themselves to be completely secluded from intercourse with the world; and the idea of the building itself is said to have been taken from Solomon's porch, erected near the temple. Sometimes there was a fountain in the middle of the green, and the doors leading into it were usually consecrated with relics.* The day of the month was proclaimed in the cloister every morning after prime, by the boys belonging to the monastery; and books were chained there for the instruction of novices.

Infirmary.

The infirmary had a chapel annexed to it, wherein a service specially appointed for the sick was performed. It was furnished with suitable chambers, and was strewed with rushes as often as it was found necessary. A common appendage to it was a garden or court, for the recreation of the sick, and in some monasteries there was also a long enclosed gallery for the same purpose.†

By the Anglo-Saxon Institutes, when a monk was

* Du Cange v. Atrium. † Davies, p. 104.

taken severely ill, he announced his disease to the abbot, or the whole of the brethren, and having received the benediction, he retired to the infirmary. To this the Norman decretals add, that, from the day he began to eat flesh there, he should walk with his hood on, and leaning on a staff. As soon as he was convalescent, after being shaved, he was to attend Divine service at the hour before chapter, and if there was a mass afterwards, not to offer at it. When the chapter commenced, he was to enter as soon as the affairs of the order began to be discussed, solicit pardon for having eaten meat, throw himself at the feet of the abbot after having received absolution, and return thanks to him and the convent, for the assistance which he had received from them during his sickness.

By the same institutes, when a monk was sick beyond prospect of recovery, it was notified to the abbot and convent, by the infirmarer, and they immediately attended him, and gave him extreme unction, and afterwards administered the Eucharist to him; when his death approached, they went to witness his departure, and began the commendation of his soul.

According to the Norman decretals, he was visited at first only by a deputation, who sprinkled, confessed, and absolved him, and then gave him extreme

unction and the Eucharist. He was constantly attended by two monks, who read to him the Passion of our Lord, and the Gospels, while he continued sensible; and when he was deprived of his understanding, they never ceased singing the psalter. As soon as he appeared to be on the verge of dissolution, a servant laid a hair cloth over him, and sat watching until he was just departing, and then with the two monks, ran to the cloister door, and beat upon a table to give notice to the convent to come to him, which they accordingly did, and began a religious service, after which they again retired, certain of them remaining with him to sing the Psalter. The others again returned to perform the commendation of his soul.

Manual exercise was commonly adopted in the infirmary, as a means for restoring health, and it appears that some of the patients were occasionally employed in sawing billets. It was usual for monks, in chronic infirmities, to spend their remaining days in the infirmary, where they formed a little society, and as they would thus behold each other's ailments, they would, doubtless, be induced to bear each others' burdens, and thus fulfil the law of Christ; descending quietly to the grave, and encouraging each other with the joyful hope of a blessed immortality.

Guest Hall.

The guest hall in the monastery at Canterbury was forty feet broad, and one hundred and fifty feet long, situated where it would be least likely to interfere with the privacy of the monks. It had columns like the nave of a church, and was called occasionally palatium, or palace, meaning a place of short residence. There was a room before the guest hall, called Pro-aula, or Salutorium, a place where visitors were first received. It appears to have been the same as the visitors' parlour, and, perhaps, as the Pulsatorium.*

Visitors were received by the hosteler, or hospitaller, who gave them the kiss of peace: and they were allowed to remain and partake of the hospitality of the monastery two days, and two nights; on the third day, after dinner, they were expected to depart. If, however, a guest could not conveniently depart at that time, he might obtain leave of the abbot to prolong his stay. It appears that the sons of donors, who were unable to injure the monks by law, would burden them with frequent visits; and that in consequence of this, several statutes were made in order to relieve the oppressed monasteries. For even in those days the keep of horses, dogs,

* So called from "Knock, and it shall be opened unto you."

hawks, and servants, entailed upon the society no little expense.

Locutory, or Parlour.

The locutory was a room in which conversations were occasionally held, when silence was enjoined in other places; and, according to the rule of St. Victor, when any subject required immediate discussion, the precentor led the way into the parlour, and those who had any information to afford, were required to give it as briefly as possible. No one was allowed to enter, unless invited by either the abbot or prior. The servants who were introduced there to receive any necessary orders or information, were not allowed to sit down, or remain longer than was necessary for receiving their directions; and those who had license to sit were not permitted to remain long, and not more than four were admitted at one time.

In the nuns' parlour there was a grating, covered with a curtain, which was not to be removed, except when any one spoke to them, or when they received the Eucharist, which was usually administered to the nuns in the parlour.

Almonry.

The almonry was sometimes a stone building near the church, this being its proper situation, in order

to denote the close connexion which exists between charity and religion. The alms were, properly, under the immediate superintendence of the superior; but an officer was appointed to assist in their distribution; and in case of necessity any of the monks might dispense them. The distribution of alms at Glastonbury, and most other houses, was on Wednesdays and Fridays. Certain scholars had constant residence in the almonry of St. Augustine at Canterbury, and the poor and sick flocked to it from all quarters. The whole revenues of certain churches, besides the abbot's alms, were devoted to it. Indeed the tenth of all the monastic proceeds was to be given to the poor.*

Library.

The library, and also the muniments of the house, were under the care of the precentor, who could neither lend nor sell any of the books with which he was entrusted, without receiving, at least, an equivalent in return. It appears, however, when a new abbey was founded, the old abbeys were ordered, by letters patent, to supply the new establishment with books. The king himself not unfrequently contributed a few works, and libraries which contained duplicates or triplicates, would suffer no

* Brit. Monach., 336.

great injury in imparting a portion of their superfluities to societies which stood in need of them.

As the art of printing was unknown in those days, the works in most libraries must of necessity have been far from numerous; but notwithstanding the difficulties which lay in the way of multiplying copies, monastic zeal surmounted the obstacles which beset them; and the MSS. which now adorn our public, and some few private libraries, are an irrefragable evidence of the skill and taste which took refuge in the cloister.

In the monastic library, works on theology and history abounded, nor were such collections unenriched with poetry, the classics, and works of humour.

These works were kept in painted presses, or almeries; and chests, as well as shelves, were also used. It must be borne in mind that all works in those days were MS., and it therefore required no small art and trouble to make a clear and satisfactory arrangement.

Scriptorium.

This is commonly called the writing-room, and was the room in which many of the monks were employed in writing new works, or multiplying the copies of old ones. Writing books, as a monastic

employment, was introduced into monasteries at a very early period. Among British monks, David, the celebrated Welch saint, had a study or writing-room, and is said to have commenced writing the Gospel of St. John, in golden letters, with his own hands.* The Anglo-Saxon artists possessed eminent skill in the execution of their books, and the character which they used had the honour of giving rise to the modern beautiful Roman letter. After the Norman invasion, this art degenerated, and the MSS. which were written subsequently, are frequently difficult to read.† The missals and other books connected with the Divine offices, were curiously and expensively adorned, many specimens of which now remain as monuments of monastic times. Great care was also bestowed in transcribing the works of the Latin fathers and classic authors; but, what is rather singular, little pains were employed on books of national and monastic history, unless the books were intended for presents. The monks who were employed in transcribing were distinguished by the names Antiquarii and Librarii.‡ The former are

* Girald. Cambren. in vita Davidis, Angl. Sac. ii. 635.

† There were some good writers till near the time of printing. There are many copies of Wiclif's Bible beautifully written. The difficulties, to which allusion has been made above, arose chiefly from the great use of contractions and abbreviations.

‡ Antiquaries and Amanuenses.

said to have been chiefly occupied in making new copies of old books, either for the use of the monastery, or for their own emolument; and the latter to have been an inferior kind of writers, who were employed in copying new works. There is, however, some doubt as to this division of labour between these two classes; and it is probable that the Antiquarii rescued from oblivion ancient MSS., and directed or superintended the Librarii in transcribing them. The persons who were thus employed were selected by the abbot, and he thus became to a certain extent answerable for any inaccuracies, which were the result of ignorance or incompetency. The writing instruments were parchment, pens, chalk, pumice stones for rubbing the parchment, penknives, and other knives to scrape, &c. the parchment, a punctorium to make dots, a weight to keep the parchment down, a ruler, inkstands, and styles made of iron or horn; for the ancient mode of writing on wax continued to be practised in preparing the tables for the officiating minister of the choir, after it ceased to be employed for other works. It is said that vellum had superseded the use of waxen tablets in the time of Alfred; while the most ancient paper books known to be in existence are supposed to have been written about the tenth century.

The invention of printing in the fifteenth century

threw the monastic transcribers out of employment, and, consequently, writing soon afterwards lost much of its beauty. The last specimen of illuminated writing, before the art was entirely abandoned, is said to be the Lectionary of Cardinal Wolsey, now preserved at Christ Church, Oxford.*

Misericord.

The word misericord was used to denote stated indulgencies and allowances, according to circumstances, of food and drink, over and above what was permitted by the rule. Hence this name was also applied to the hall in which these indulgencies were enjoyed. It was furnished with tables and seats, like the refectory; and, by an ancient injunction, it was ordered that "all and singular brethren and monks of this monastery, take the refection all together in a place called the *misericorde* soch dayes as they ete flesh, and all other dayes in the refectory."†

Song School.

The song-school, according to Davies, was built within the church, and was wainscotted round, and furnished with a desk which extended the whole length of the room, and benches for the use of the chil-

* Warton, vol. iii., 429.

† MS. Cott. Cleop. E. iv., p. 22. Brit. Monach. 357.

dren. The master's seat was rendered warm and comfortable by being boarded round. The office of the master was to teach the children to sing and play on the organ; and as music entered largely into their religious services, they had hence a regular supply of persons capable of conducting it with proper solemnity.

Mints and Exchequer.

The principal abbeys had the privilege of coining money within the monastery, which passed current in the country like the coin of the realm. Some of these coins are still in existence, and are denominated "abbey pieces." The abbot was the person to whom this distinguished privilege was granted, and he appointed an officer, called a monier, to superintend the mint.

It is unnecessary to describe or enumerate the other departments of an abbey, such as the kitchen, bakehouse, &c., because their names are at once indicative of their respective uses, and we are at the same time assured, that such offices were indispensable in a large establishment.

Convenience and utility appear to have been the leading principles in the monastic arrangements; and the nature of these in no small degree depended upon the funds which were placed at the disposal

of those who had the direction of the building. In large and wealthy abbeys, for instance, the kitchens were on a magnificent scale, and far exceeded those of baronial establishments. The kitchen, which is still in a very perfect state, at Glastonbury, will enable the spectator to form a tolerably correct notion of the extent of the abbot's revenue, as well as of his hospitality. For it must be borne in mind that this extensive culinary display was not for the sake of affording the means of regaling the inmates alone, but of entertaining royal or lordly visitors, and feeding the poor and needy in their neighbourhood. Whatever ridicule may have been cast upon these institutions, their hospitality is unimpeachable.

Cells.

Cells appear to have been an ill contrived part of the monastic system, since they were often the means of bringing discredit upon the order which adopted them. If they were used as places of punishment, to which monks were occasionally sent, they were not calculated to accomplish that object; since it was sending those out of the way of control who needed control the most; and if they were designed for convenience of business, to enable some to look after the secular affairs of the convent, distant estates, &c. it was an interruption to closer discipline. It was,

however, considered a grievance to be sent to a distant cell, or to be sent from cell to cell; because Matthew Paris tells us, that people used to say of such, "This man has done something wrong, or the abbot hates him, or envies him, because he is better than himself, or contradicts his errors, or reproves his excesses."*

In the rules of St. Victor, the brethren who staid at cells were to be three in every place, if possible, or two at least, in order that they might be a check on each other, and that they might hence be preserved from the temptation to which solitude might have exposed them. It is said that the Cistercians were so well aware of the irregularities, which, even under the above circumstances, prevailed in many of the cells, that they determined to have none, and hence avoid the scandal which attended them.

Granges.

Granges were the farms belonging to the abbeys, and were occasionally the residences of abbots; in the latter case they had not unfrequently parks annexed to them. In the reign of Edward I., Thomas, Lord Berkeley being out of health, went to a grange of the Abbot of St. Augustine's, Canterbury, for change of air, and remained there until he recovered.

* Matthew Paris, p. 1046.

The abbot's bill amounted to 2d., which the abbot received. The granges were furnished with the usual agricultural stock, and in other respects also were not unlike the better class of modern farm houses. From the proceedings which occurred in a synod, held at Cologne, A.D. 1300, it appears that some persons hung torches with letters annexed to them, at the gates of abbeys and granges, in which they threatened fires, homicides, &c., unless a certain sum of money was given them in a limited time. It therefore seems that the modern system of incendiarism is only a revival of what prevailed in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries.

CHAPTER XV.

SKETCHES OF SOME OF THE PRINCIPAL ENGLISH BENEDICTINE MONASTERIES. GLASTONBURY. ST. ALBAN'S. WESTMINSTER. PETERBOROUGH. CROYLAND. ABINGDON. ST. EDMUND'S BURY. TEWKESBURY. CHESTER.

> "And, not in vain embodied to the sight,
> Religion finds e'en in the stern retreat
> Of feudal sway, her own appropriate seat."
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THE preceding details of a monastic establishment will be best illustrated by sketches of some of our most eminent monasteries, and by tracing their history from their foundation to their dissolution. The limits of this volume necessarily preclude both a numerous selection and a minute history; those monasteries, therefore, are introduced, together with

their most interesting features, by which the reader may become acquainted with the importance of these institutions, and may hence be led to make further enquiries into a subject fraught with deep and stirring interest.

Glastonbury Abbey.

Although the original foundation of Glastonbury is fixed at a period when a vague tradition, rather than an authentic history, recorded the various passing events, we shall date our sketch from the time when the Benedictine rule was established there through the unwearied exertions, and by the authority of Dunstan; sufficient allusion having already been made to its early history, in tracing the course of that extraordinary man. Edgar, whom we before mentioned as the great patron of monachism, endowed Glastonbury with many possessions and immunities, which were afterwards confirmed by a papal bull of John VIII. Among these privileges was the power of determining pleas, and correcting delinquents; sanctuary within the limits of the hundred; the appropriation of hidden treasures to the use of the monastery; that the monks should always be the electors of their own abbot; and that all controversies whatever, within their jurisdiction, should

be determined in the abbot's court. Between the abbacy of Dunstan, and the Norman conquest, seven abbots presided over the monastery; and the last of these, whose name was Egelnoth, was deposed by William, in consequence, as it is said, of his high reputation. Being esteemed one of the principal men in the nation at the time of the conquest, he excited the jealousy of the Conqueror, who, in consequence, carried him into Normandy, and appointed Thurstan, a Cluniac monk of Caen, as his successor. This abbot, irregularly appointed, and forced upon the monastery in violation of their privileges, was very tyrannical, and wasted the revenues of the abbey: he, moreover, perverted several of the ancient statutes, and when the monks refused to submit to his authority, he introduced soldiers into the monastery, who drove the monks from their chapter-house to the church, and there violated the sanctuary by killing some, and wounding others. In consequence of this Thurstan was removed; and William, in order to make some amends to the monastery for the injury it had sustained through the bad conduct of his nominee, confirmed to them the possession of certain lands. The lands which the monastery of Glastonbury possessed previous to the Norman Conquest, were very extensive; but at the conquest many of them were transferred to the fol-

lowers of the Conqueror. Still, however, the monastery continued to hold very considerable estates, and to the improvement of these, as well as to the recovery of other lands, of which the abbey had been deprived, and also to the restoration of the buildings, and the internal management of the convent, Herlewin, who succeeded Thurstan in the abbacy, appears to have paid constant attention. He pulled down the church which had been commenced by his predecessor, because it did not correspond with the dignity and possessions of the monastery, and expended four hundred and eighty pounds, a large sum in those days, on the foundation of a new fabric, which he moreover enriched with many ornaments of exquisite workmanship.

This abbey met with another munificent benefactor in the person of Henry de Blois, nephew of King Henry the First, who became abbot about A.D. 1126, and afterwards Bishop of Winchester, a man universally esteemed for his learning, affability, and exemplary conduct. He succeeded in recovering many of the possessions of the abbey, which had been taken away by the Conqueror: and also built a magnificent lodging in it, which was called the castle. His munificence taking a wider range, he built, in addition to the above princely edifice, the belfry, the chapter-house, the cloister, the lavatory, the refectory, the

dormitory, the infirmary, with its chapel, the outer gate of hewn stone, the great brew-house, and several stables for horses, all constructed with an air of grandeur bespeaking the spirit of the donor. He also presented many ornaments to the church, and procured from Kings Henry the First, Stephen, and Henry the Second, a confirmation of the possessions and privileges of the abbey. Henri de Blois was succeeded by Robert, prior of Winchester, and he dying about seven years after his appointment, Henry the Second retained possession of the monastery several years, by refusing to nominate another abbot; since, for some time after the Norman conquest, the appointment appears to have been vested in the king.

During the space of nearly twenty years, commencing A. D. 1199, a violent contest prevailed between the monks of Glastonbury and the Bishop of Wells, who endeavoured to annex Glastonbury to his see, and assumed the title of Bishop of Glastonbury. This controversy was at length decided by a commissioner from Rome, who gave the bishop a certain portion of the manors belonging to Glastonbury, and restored the other to the monks. Two of the monks were then despatched to Rome with this agreement, and having laid a statement of the whole case before the papal council, they obtained the en-

tire separation of the monastery from the bishopric, and free liberty to elect an abbot according to their own rules. Immediately on the return of these monks from Rome, the convent proceeded to the choice of a head, and elected William Vigor, who had taken an active part in the late disputes. Several abbots presided over the monastery, and enriched it with various benefactions, between the abbacy of Vigor, and Adam de Sodbury, who is still known as a great patron of the mechanical arts, by having employed one Peter Lightfoot, a monk of the abbey, to construct an astronomical clock, with a variety of machinery, which is now to be seen in the cathedral of Wells, where it was removed after the dissolution of the monastery. Adam de Sodbury was a considerable benefactor to his abbey, presenting it with an organ, bells, &c., and procuring the ancient immunities of the church to be confirmed by royal charter. His successor expended a large sum in completing the abbot's great hall, and in erecting other buildings. The next abbot emulated his predecessor in benefactions, and what he left unfinished was completed by those who followed him.

It thus appears that the magnificent pile which once adorned "the glassy isle," and which, although in ruins, still sheds a hallowed interest around it,

was the work of munificent abbots, — men who deemed it their highest glory to consecrate their wealth to God. If superstition and error mingled with their devotion, their actuating principle was right, and the liberality which was thus displayed was amply recompensed by Him, Whom man doth not serve for nought: for their wealth appeared to increase in proportion to the liberality of their expenditure. The wealth, however, which was then possessed became a strong temptation to the covetous rapacity of the sixteenth century.

Their being a vacancy in the abbacy of Glastonbury, A.D. 1524, forty-seven of the monks requested Cardinal Wolsey to appoint an abbot, and he chose Richard Whiting, then chamberlain of the monastery. He is said to have governed his society with great prudence and judgment; but his days were unpropitious to conventual establishments. Feeling that he was responsible for the integrity of the rights and immunities of his abbey, he refused to surrender them when he was required to do so by the royal commissioners, and this firmness having exposed him to the vindictive malice of his enemies, he was, A.D. 1539, seized at his manor house at Sharpham, on a charge of high treason, and afterwards tried at Wells, and executed on Tor Hill.

After the death of the abbot, the buildings and

revenues of the monastery, all which had flourished for such a length of time, became the objects of depredation. Those riches which had flowed with liberality from the treasures of monastics, prelates, and abbots, and those structures which had outbraved the corroding attacks of time, and the waste of ages, sank together in one complete and irremediable ruin!

The abbot of Glastonbury had the precedence of all the abbots in England, until A.D. 1154, when Pope Adrian IV., the only Englishman who ever sat in the papal chair, gave that honour to the abbot of St. Albans, in consequence of having received his education in that monastery, and because the saint from whom the abbey derives its name, suffered martyrdom there. The abbot of Glastonbury was always a member of the upper house of convocation, as well as a parliamentary baron. His apartment in the abbey was a kind of court, to which the sons of noblemen and gentlemen were sent for their education, and from whence they retired well fitted to discharge their various duties in the world. It is said that Abbot Whiting brought up nearly three hundred in this manner, besides many others of a meaner rank, whom he sent to the universities. His table attendance, and officers, were an honour to the nation, and sometimes he entertained as many as five

hundred persons of distinction at a time; and every week, on Wednesdays and Fridays, all the poor in the neighbourhood were relieved by his charity. When he went abroad, which he seldom did, he was attended by upwards of one hundred persons.

The structure of the abbey corresponded with the princely state of the abbot. The ground on which the abbey and its various offices were erected comprised no less than sixty acres within the walls. The nave of the great church, from St. Joseph's Chapel to the Cross, was two hundred and twenty feet in length; the tower was forty-five feet in breadth; each transept was also forty-five in length; and the choir was one hundred and fifty feet in length; so that the entire length of the church from east to west, was four hundred and fifteen feet. The chapel of St. Joseph of Arimathea, which was contiguous to the west end of the great church, was one hundred and ten feet long, and twenty-four feet broad. Under the floor was a large sepulchral vault, having at the south-east corner an arched passage leading towards the Tor, which has been traced a considerable way. Under the body of the church were three large vaults, supported by two rows of strong massive pillars, in which lay entombed the bodies of many illustrious personages. The cloister adjoined the church on the south side,

forming a square of two hundred and twenty feet. The whole church, including St. Joseph's Chapel, being five hundred and twenty-five feet in length, contained five chapels, viz., St. Edgar's, which stood just behind the choir; St. Mary's, in the north aisle; St. Andrew's, in the south aisle; the Chapel of our Lady of Loretto, on the north side of the nave; and at the south angle the Chapel of the Holy Sepulchre. The floors were inlaid with Norman tiles, on which were inscribed scriptural sentences, and the arms, &c. of royal and other benefactors.

Immense as was the range of buildings connected with this monastery, scarcely a vestige is now to be seen, except detached fragments, consisting of some portions of the church, St. Joseph's Chapel, and the abbot's kitchen.

> "O who the ruine sees, whom wonder doth not fill,
> With our great fathers' pompe, devotion, and their skill?"

Some of the south walls of the choir are still standing, as well as some portions of St. Edgar's, St. Andrew's, and the Loretto Chapels, with the two eastern pillars of the tower, and an arch at the west end of the nave leading into St. Joseph's Chapel. The last-mentioned chapel is tolerably entire, with the exception of the roof and floor. It was an elegant structure, having on each side six windows,

under which were very rich compartments of zig-zag arches, supported by five pillars: and their spandrils were adorned with roses, crescents, and painted stars. The south door has ornaments of flowers, and the north door, which is very rich, is decorated with flourishes, foliage, and figures. The abbot's kitchen, which was built by the last abbot, is still in a state of perfect preservation. It is an octagonal building, having in the angles four fire-places, sixteen feet in length. In the flat part of the roof an arched octagonal pyramid rises, terminated by a double lantern. According to the account which Leland has left of the library, it was well stored with books and MSS. "It was scarcely equalled," says he, "by any other library in all Britain. I had scarcely passed the threshold, when the very sight of so many sacred remains of antiquity struck me with an awe and astonishment, that for a moment I hesitated." But of the library, with its rich treasures, and the scriptorium which adjoined it, where the monks were employed in composing or transcribing books for the use of the monastery, not a single vestige now remains!

The manor of Glastonbury, together with the building and site of the monastery, church, &c., belonging to it, was granted by King Edward the Sixth, in the first year of his reign, to Edward, Duke

of Somerset. Thus the patrimony of the Church became alienated, and the means provided by the piety of former ages for affording retirement and seclusion from the world, were appropriated to the maintenance of secular grandeur.

St. Alban's Abbey.

The foundation of St. Alban's Abbey has a great claim upon our attention, not only because it is connected with the primitive Christianity of this country, but because, after the papacy of Adrian IV., it superseded Glastonbury in enjoying precedency among English monasteries.

Offa, who reigned over the Mercians in the eighth century, and who had obtained a very considerable degree of military reputation, was desirous of closing his life by an act, which he was led to expect would atone for the crimes and pollutions which had, in a moral point of view, stained his reign. He resolved, therefore, to build a monastery, but was at a loss both with regard to the place and the person to whom it should be dedicated. The name of our Lord, as well as that of St. Peter and St. Paul, had already been employed; and Offa being desirous of obtaining the tutelary favour of some saint, whose name had not been invoked in a similar way, was induced to select

the first British martyr,* as the object of his especial reverence, and accordingly dedicated his new foundation to St. Alban. Matthew Paris, the historian of St. Alban's Abbey, who was also a distinguished member of that society, relates many marvellous tales relative to the supernatural direction of the Mercian monarch in selecting a saint to whom he should dedicate his intended abbey, as well as in the selection of a site for the building. These tales, however, being the offspring of a much later age than the period to which they relate, are too ridiculous to claim even a passing notice. All that is known with any degree of certainty on the subject is, that a church having been early erected in memory of St. Alban, and having been demolished, Offa selected a spot either on, or near, the site of the original church, and commenced the building of his intended monastery, by laying, with great solemnity, the first stone, and saying, "To Thee, O Jesus, and to thee, O Martyr Alban! and to thee, O Willegod,† we commit this building, with maledictions on all who shall disturb it, and eternal blessings on all those who shall be its benefactors."‡ Offa then pro-

* Alban suffered martyrdom during the Dioclesian persecution, A.D. 303.

† The first abbot, whom Offa appointed.

‡ Append. M. Paris, p. 986.

ceeded with his undertaking, which he completed in about four years, furnishing Willegod with money, and placing him at the head of the establishment, after which he retired to his palace at Offley, where he ended his days. The abbey was endowed by Offa with his manor and palace of Winslow, about twenty miles distant from the monastery, and, according to Matthew Paris, as many miles in circumference.*

The abbey speedily acquired a considerable reputation, which caused a village to be gathered about it: the inhabitants of the adjacent parts being invited to build and settle there. It was not, however, permitted to enjoy its possession in uninterrupted peace, as the ravages which the Danes committed during their piratical incursions, inspired alarm in almost every cloister, and the inmates of St. Alban's were not exempt from the terrors which their depredations occasioned. A common danger not unusually excites a generous feeling and compassion for those who are first exposed to it: but in the danger to which we are now alluding a jealousy of superior sanctity seems to have got the better of the generous impulse of our nature, as will appear from the following anecdote:—

During the reign of Edward the Confessor, the

* Append. M. Paris, p. 987.

Danes renewed their invasions, and made great havock wherever they came. Ælfric, who was abbot of St. Alban's at the time, fearing that during a projected invasion, their ravages would extend to his monastery, caused the most valuable effects of the monastery to be concealed in a secret recess in a wall. Among these valuables were the bones of St. Alban, and the shrine in which they were enclosed. He communicated what he had done to a few of the monks, and in order to remove a suspicion that anything was concealed, he sent an open message to the abbot and monks of Ely, requesting that as their monastery was well secured by waters and marshes, from the incursions of their common foe, they would be pleased to receive into their convent of Ely the relics of St. Alban, and keep them safe, until the danger with which they were threatened should be over. The monks of Ely consented, and Ælfric sent them the remains or relics of some ordinary monk, enclosed in a very rich chest. He also sent many ornaments of his church; and, to give a better appearance to the whole, he added a very rough, shagged old coat, with a caution and insinuation, that it was the very coat, usually worn by Amphibalus, the instructor of St. Alban.

The Danes were, however, disappointed in their projected invasion by the loss of their king, who, as

he was embarking, fell into the sea, and was drowned. In less than a year, the alarm which this threatened invasion had caused subsided, and peace and security again prevailed within these shores. The monks of St. Alban's abbey then demanded back their relics, which they of Ely refused to surrender, sending back an impertinent message in reply to the demand. The true owners pleaded the sanctity of the engagement, and threatened to inform both the king and the pope of their breach of faith. The monks of Ely began to fear that they should get into trouble, and, as they thought the relics of St. Alban would be as valuable to them as to their old masters, they resolved to keep them ; but, in order to save appearances, they contrived to open the bottom of the chest, drew out the bones, and placed others of an ordinary sort in their room, and then sent back the chest and its contents! Ælfric now drew the authentic relics from the place of their concealment, and placed them within the shrine in the middle of the church. The king, however, being informed of the fraud which was thus committed by the monks of Ely, expressed great displeasure at their breach of faith, and but for his death, which occurred shortly after, would have punished them severely.*

Ælfric was succeeded in his abbacy by Leofstan,

* Append. M. Paris, p. 996.

who dying A.D. 1066, left his monastery in very affluent circumstances, as appears from the survey which the conqueror, who came to England in that year, caused to be made.

At the time of the conquest, monasteries were established throughout the kingdom, and were possessed of lands and revenues which excited the cupidity both of monarchs and nobles. Succeeding times witnessed a considerable declension in religious feeling, and it was not an uncommon event, when a vacancy occurred in an abbacy, through death, or any other cause, for the appointment of a successor to be deferred for one, two, and three years, and occasionally for even a longer period, the abbot's income, during this interruption, being diverted from the abbey to the royal treasury. The abbey of St. Alban's, like nearly every other establishment of similar importance, suffered from these arbitrary proceedings. In return, however, for these peculations, royalty condescended to honour the principal monasteries with its presence, especially at the great festivals; and an account which has been handed down to us, of a visit which King Henry the Second paid to St. Alban's Abbey, and a circumstance which then occurred, will show on what footing Churchmen of eminence stood, in those days, with the reigning monarch.

The king, on one occasion, went down to the abbey, accompanied by a large train of attendants, to pay a visit to Warren, who had been recently elected abbot, and who enjoyed a very considerable degree of court favour. The king desired to see the monks, and all the members of the abbey, assembled together, and, accordingly, they met, and took their respective places in the chapter-house. When the royal guest entered, he seated himself in the abbot's chair, in the middle of the room, with the abbot on his right hand, and the Bishop of Lincoln on his left, and then bowing to either side, he entreated them to "pray with incessant prayers for the safety of himself, his queen, and his children, and also for the whole estate of the realm." To this the whole convent willingly consented, acknowledging that they were bound to perform this duty by every tie of gratitude. The Bishop of Lincoln then rose up, and addressing himself to the king, said, that "he begged leave to prefer a complaint to his majesty, which was, that he was greatly injured, and the church of Lincoln shamefully mutilated, by cutting off from it so noble a member as this monastery." "With your permission," said he, "I must move a question against this abbot. Whatever my predecessor did, who was simple and easy, he was circumvented in the same: the world well knows that

this church is subject to the church of Lincoln, and whatever hath been done in error, it is fit and expedient that the same be recalled." The abbot hearing this, laid his bare hand on the king's knee, and, without rising, said, "Your majesty is the pledge of my peace, the witness and mediator of the compromise which was begun and confirmed between us." The king arose in some warmth, and exclaimed "By the eyes of God! I was present at the agreement. What is it, my Lord of Lincoln, you would attempt? Do you think that these things were done in secret? I myself, and the most chosen men of the realm, were present; and what was then done is ratified by writings the most incontestible, and confirmed by the testimony of the nobles. The determination stands good, and whoever sets himself to combat this abbot and monastery, combats me! What seek you? To touch the pupil of mine eyes?" The Bishop of Lincoln being surprised by this sudden outburst of royal violence, did not utter another word, nor was the question ever mooted again!

This altercation shows the height to which monastic influence had attained, and it was not altogether unproductive of good to the abbot, as he was elected Archbishop of Rouen the following year, and, it is said, he entirely owed his appointment to the above circumstance. Warren was a considerable

benefactor to his monastery in various ways, and when he found his end approaching, he bequeathed a hundred marks to his successor to renew the front of the church.

John de Cella, who succeeded Warren in the abbacy, proceeded under the direction of his chief advisers in such matters, Raymond, his prior, and Roger Parker, the cellarer, to execute the wishes of his predecessor, by pulling down the front of the church, which was composed of tiles strongly compacted in mortar. Having unfortunately employed a dishonest builder, the hundred marks were expended before the building was raised above the ground. Much money is said to have been laid out on unnecessary ornaments, and the abbot at length became weary of his undertaking, which was proceeding very slowly towards its completion; and the building being exposed to the weather in an unfinished state, eventually fell to the ground under its own weight. The abbot then entrusted the work to one of the monks, named Gilbert de Eversholt, and ordered one sheaf of corn to be contributed towards it from every acre sown of the abbey estates. The abbot finding the work still going on very slowly, and despairing of ever completing what he had begun, turned his attention to other objects of repair. He pulled down the old refectory, which

was not only ruinous, but dark, and rebuilt it in a handsomer form. This work he lived to complete, and dined in it with his monks; he also rebuilt the dormitory and its offices.

Matthew Paris gives an interesting account of the circumstances which attended the last hours of this abbot. Finding his end approaching, and wishing to meet the convent in the chapter-house, he was assisted there, and he then entreated pardon of the convent for all his transgressions, and for any wrongs he had done them, which being granted, he next desired to receive the discipline from the convent; but on exposing his body, his emaciated frame excited the compassion of those who beheld it, and caused them to shed tears: he, however, insisted upon receiving discipline, and this having been administered, he bid farewell to the convent, and was conveyed to the infirmary, where, upon a stone used for that purpose, he received "extreme unction;" and when this rite was ended, he exclaimed "Consummatum est" (it is finished), and kissing the members of the abbey singly, he added, "Recedo a vobis, irrediturus; vos me Deo commendastis, et ego vos Deo recommendo. Quod meum est complevi":—(I depart from you never to return; you have commended me to God, as I do you; I have done what I could.) He was then taken to his chamber. On the following day,

having consulted his physician, and being informed of all his symptoms, he gave thanks to God, and expressed his conviction that in three days he should cease to live. He then became gradually worse, and on the day preceding his death, which happened at the time he predicted, being asked by a friend how he felt, he raised his eyes, and fixing them upon his visitant, he replied in the following extempore verses:—

"Non video pure, mihi nil sapit, audio dure,
Deficit olfactus, sum segnis ad omnia factus."

"My vision fails, my mental powers decay,
And each dulled sense is fleeting fast away."

He died on the day of St. Kenelm, king and martyr, A.D. 1214.*

During the abbacy of John de la Moote, who was originally the cellarer of the monastery, and who was elected to preside over it, Oct. 9th, A.D. 1396, a violent dispute occurred between him and the abbot of Westminster, for precedency in parliament, which having been originally granted to the abbey of St. Alban's by Pope Adrian IV., was claimed by the abbot of Westminster; and the king favouring the claim of the latter, he maintained his claim, and it does not appear that any succeeding abbot of St.

* M. Paris, p. 1045.

Alban's took any steps to regain his pre-eminence, although they were much dissatisfied at being obliged to sit below the abbot of Westminster. John de Whethamstede, who received the temporalities from the king, Oct. 23, A.D. 1420, attained the highest celebrity for his literary attainments of any of the abbots who presided over this important establishment; but his high character only rendered him an object of envy, and finding that his friend, Humphrey, Duke of Gloucester, was losing his popularity at court, he thought it would be prudent to resign his appointment, and assigning ill health as a reason, he executed his purpose, A.D. 1440.

He was succeeded by John Stoke, then prior of Wallingford; but. Stoke dying about eleven years afterwards, the convent unanimously agreed to re-elect John de Whethamstede. After his installation, he proceeded to inquire into the state of the abbey's finances, and found that many valuable presents, which had been bestowed upon the monastery by the Duke of Gloucester, had never been received; and what was still more mortifying, he saw them pass irrecoverably to the king's new foundations at Eton and Cambridge. As a compensation, however, for the loss of these valuables, the reigning monarch, King Henry the Sixth, had ordered a charter of privileges to be prepared for his signature. The execu-

tion of this deed having been delayed for a considerable time, Whethamstede, upon one of the king's progresses to the abbey, embraced the opportunity of urging the completion of his intention, in which he succeeded, and obtained for his convent the confirmation and ratification of two charters, which had been previously granted by this prince. The abbot also found the revenues of the abbey in a much less flourishing condition than he anticipated, and the consequent internal derangement of affairs, combined with the civil commotions of the state, which now began to be divided by the contentions of the houses of York and Lancaster, conspired to render the second period of this abbot's government both difficult and dangerous. In this fatal quarrel, the first blow was struck at St. Alban's, A.D. 1455, in the battle between Richard, Duke of York, and King Henry the Sixth.* The battle was carried on in the streets of St. Alban's, and ended in the discomfiture of the royal army. King Henry himself, wounded in the neck by an arrow, and deserted by his friends, sought shelter in a cottage, where he was found by the Duke of York, and conducted to the abbey. Upon this occasion, the abbey escaped without injury, which may be attributed to the circumstance of the king being obliged to pass the night preced-

* Clutterbuck's Hist., Hertf., vol. 1, p. 32.

ing the engagement, in his camp, instead of taking up his abode within the walls of the abbey.*

King Henry the Sixth passed the Easter, A.D. 1459, at the abbey, ordering his best robe to be delivered to the prior at his departure. The following year was rendered still more memorable by the second battle of St. Alban's, which was fought on Shrove Tuesday, February 17th, between Margaret of Anjou and the Yorkists, under the command of the Earl of Warwick. The queen was victorious, and with the king and prince Edward, retired at first to the abbey, which, in these unhappy contests, only suffered in a pecuniary point of view. Abbot Whethamstede died A.D. 1464; and after three succeeding abbots, Thomas Wolsey, better known as Cardinal Wolsey, received the abbacy, which he was allowed to hold in commendam with the archbishoprick of York, and numerous other preferments. This was an innovation upon the ancient conventual system, which seemed to portend some fatal blow to that portion of the Church; as previously the personal attendance, and the constant presence of the ruler of a monastic establishment was required. Wolsey being engaged in building his colleges at Oxford and Ipswich at the time of his appointment, it is supposed he obtained this abbacy with a view of direct-

* Monasticon., vol. 2, p. 203.

ing part of the revenues of the monastery to his new foundations. He soon afterwards fell into trouble, and eventually being pardoned by the king, he was permitted to retain the headship of this abbey until his death. He was succeeded by Robert Catton, after whose death, which occurred in 1538, Richard Boreman was appointed, being the last and fortieth abbot. His appointment is supposed to have been made solely with a view to the surrender of the monastery, which he resigned December 5, A. D. 1540, the king, by his charter, assigning to him the yearly pension of £266. 13s. 4d. for the term of his life. The revenues of the abbey were valued, according to Dugdale, at £2102. 7s. 1¾d.

The greatest portion of the site of the monastic buildings was granted by the king to Sir Richard Lee. The conventual church, however, was excepted, and was subsequently granted by King Edward the Sixth to the inhabitants, to serve as a parish church, in lieu of the demolished Church of St. Andrew.*

The convent seal of St. Alban's was delivered to the king's commissioners at the time the monastery was surrendered, and is still preserved among the

* It is still a noble pile, and worthy of him whose name and sufferings it commemorates. The restorations which the improving taste of the times has effected will long preserve this beautiful edifice as a monument of our forefathers' skill.

curiosities in the British Museum. It is made of ivory, of an oval form, and bears the representation of St. Alban seated, holding in his hand a palm branch. Round is this legend, "Sigillvm. sci. Albani. Anglorv. p'tomartiris." The seal of St. Alban, the protomartyr of England.

Westminster Abbey.

Sebert, king of the East Saxons, is said by Gervase of Canterbury, to have been the founder of Westminster Abbey, and that he was persuaded to the work by Mellitus, one of Augustine's companions, and who at that time presided over the see of London. The celebrated legend of St. Peter's apparition is connected with the consecration of this abbey, and was cleverly devised in order to exempt the abbey from episcopal jurisdiction. The legend is thus related by Sulcardus:—"The church having been completed, was prepared for dedication on the following day. On the night preceding, St. Peter appeared on the opposite side of the water to a fisherman, and desired to be conveyed across the river. Having left the boat, St. Peter ordered the fisherman to wait, promising him a reward on his return. An innumerable host from heaven accompanied the Apostle, singing choral hymns, while everything was illuminated by a supernatural light.

This proceeding denoted the dedication of the church. When it was finished, St. Peter returned to the fisherman, quieted his alarm at what had taken place, and announced himself as the Apostle St. Peter. He, moreover, directed the fisherman to go as soon as it was day to Mellitus, and state what he had seen and heard, and to inform him that in corroboration of his testimony he would find the marks of consecration on the walls of the church. St. Peter then, as a further corroboration of the miracle, and to assure the fisherman of the reality of his appearance, ordered him to cast his nets into the river, and to take one of the fish he should catch, to Mellitus, and to present it to him in the Apostle's name, as a token to the bishop of the miraculous event which had occurred. Having charged the fisherman never to follow his calling in future on the Sabbath, he disappeared. The fisherman immediately afterwards let down his nets, and was rewarded with such a miraculous draught of salmon, that his nets could scarcely contain them. In obedience to the Apostle's direction, the fisherman waited on Mellitus, who going to the church, found not only marks of the chrism, but also of the tapers with which the church had been illuminated. Mellitus, therefore, desisted from proceeding to a new consecration, and merely celebrated mass.* Dark days however awaited

* Monasticon, vol. i., p. 265.

the bishop and his new foundation. On the death of Sebert, Mellitus was driven from his see by the king's sons, who having repelled all the attempts which had been made to effect their conversion, were highly incensed on being refused permission to taste some consecrated bread. For many years the church which Sebert had built, stood neglected, but at length better times dawned; and towards the end of the eighth century it was restored by Offa, King of Mercia, who also added to the original endowment. It was afterwards enriched by many succeeding benefactors, and it still abounds with much to interest the patriotic antiquary, in consequence of having been connected with many eventful passages in our national history. It was long celebrated as a sanctuary; and among others, the Queen of Edward IV. took refuge there when Henry VI. was restored to his throne. Fabyan, in his "Chronicle," states, that during this time, "she was lyghted of a fayre prince. And within the sayd place, the sayd childe, without pompe, was after cristenyd, whose godfaders were the abbot and prior of the sayd place, and the Lady Scrope god-moder.* This occurred A.D. 1470, when Thomas Millyng was abbot; and thirteen years afterwards, his successor, John Esteney, received the same unfortunate lady into sanc-

* Fabyan's Chronicle, edit. 1811, p. 659.

tuary, she having fled there with the five princesses, and the Duke of York, on the arrest of the Earl Rivers, from the malice of Richard III. The privilege of sanctuary, according to Stowe, was granted to this monastery by King Edward the Confessor;* but Widmore, in his history of Westminster Abbey, says that it more probably arose from canonizing Edward the Confessor, who having caused the abbey to be rebuilt, was, therefore, regarded as a founder. Whether, however, this privilege arose from a grant,

* "Edward, by the grace of God, king of Englishmen: I make it to be known to all generations of the world after me, that by especial commandment of our holy father Pope Leo, I have renewed and honoured the holy church of the blessed Apostle St. Peter of Westminster, and I order and establish for ever, that what person of what condition or estate soever he be, from whencesoever he come, or for what offence or cause it be, or for his refuge into the said holy place, he be assured of his life, liberty, and limbs. And, moreover, I forbid under the pain of everlasting damnation, that no minister of mine, or of my successors, intermeddle with any of the goods, lands, or possessions of the said persons, taking the said sanctuary: for I have taken their goods and livelihood into my special protection; and therefore I grant to each and every of them, as much as my terrestrial power may suffice, all manner of freedom and joyous liberty, and whosoever presumes, or doth contrary to this my grant, I will he lose his name, worship, dignity and power, and that with the great traitor Judas, that betrayed our Saviour, he be in the everlasting fire of hell. And I will and ordain, that this my grant endure as long as there remaineth in England either love or dread of Christian name."

A similar privilege was claimed for the college of St. Martin le Grand, which was founded about A.D. 1056, by Ingelric, and Edward, his brother; this latter privilege, however, was afterwards disputed, but on the case being heard by King Henry VI., he confirmed the ancient privilege, and prescribed certain articles by which it was to be regulated. —*Stow's Survey*, p. 327.

or from the veneration with which the burial place of so pious a prince was naturally regarded, it maintained its sacred and inviolate character until the reign of Henry VIII.: John Skelton, poet laureate to that monarch, being one of the last persons of notoriety who took shelter in it. He was compelled to have recourse to this refuge, in consequence of daring to attack Cardinal Wolsey in one of his satires.

The present edifice has evidently been built at different times, and that part known by the name of Henry the Seventh's Chapel, was commenced so recently as A.D. 1503, John Islip being the abbot. Monastic prosperity was then drawing to a close, those clouds being gathering thick which shortly afterwards burst upon it, sweeping all away. Islip was succeeded in the abbacy by William Boston, and he being the last abbot, surrendered the abbey to the crown A.D. 1540: the yearly value of the monastery being at that time, according to Dugdale, £3471 0s. 2½d. The rule observed in this abbey was that of St. Benedict. When the monastery was dissolved it was converted into a bishop's see, and Thomas Thirlby was appointed to the bishoprick: this arrangement, however, only lasted ten years, for A.D. 1550, Bishop Thirlby surrendered his bishopric, and the see being suppressed, the diocese was re-united to that of

London. The chapter existed six years after the suppression of the see, when it was forced to give way to an abbot and monks who were established there by Queen Mary. In 1560 it was again changed, and became a collegiate church, which it is at present, consisting of a dean and secular prebendaries, together with those minor officers who are usually attached to such establishments.

Peterborough Monastery.

Allusion has already been made to the original foundation of this monastery, in the account which has been given of the dedication of Medeshamsted, by Wulfere and Etheldred; we, therefore, return to its history in connection with Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, who erected a monastery on the site of Medeshamsted Abbey, and introduced the Benedictine rule, and the abbey being dedicated to St. Peter, the ancient name of Medeshamsted was afterwards superseded by that of Burh, or Burg, which eventually was incorporated with the Apostle's name, and it is still called Peterburgh, or Peterborough, *i. e.*, Peter's town. The ruinous state in which the abbey lay when its restoration was effected in the reign of Edgar, was occasioned by a furious attack which was made by the Danes A.D. 870. These plunderers having accomplished the destruction of

Croyland, proceeded in their course of devastation to Medeshamsted, whither the inhabitants of the surrounding country had retired, in order, as they hoped, to escape the merciless ravages of their heathen enemies. The first attack on this abbey being unsuccessful, the Danes renewed their assault in which Tulba, the brother of Earl Hulba, was severely wounded; this greatly enraged Hulba, and his natural ferocity having thus received a powerful stimulus, he redoubled his exertions, and forcing an entrance into the monastery, he slew all the monks with his own hand, leaving the slaughter of the rest to his soldiers. Hedda, who was at that time the abbot, fell with the monks. The altars, monuments, library, and records of the monastery, were either destroyed or torn in pieces, and the church and offices were consumed by a fire, which lasted fifteen days. Godric, who was elected abbot of Croyland by such of the monks of that monastery as survived the attack alluded to, is said to have gone over to Medeshamsted, and to have buried the bodies of Hedda, and the monks who had been slain there, amounting in number to eighty-four, in one large grave, in the middle of the churchyard, near the east front of the monastery. He also placed over them a pyramidal stone, three feet in height, three in length, and one in thickness, on which were engraved pictures of the

abbot and his monks. Godric named this stone Medeshamsted, in memory of the ruined monastery; and every year afterwards, during his life, he visited that place, pitching his tent over the stone, and saying masses two days for the souls of Hedda and his slaughtered monks.

The monastery of Medeshamsted being thus reduced to a state of desolation, lay buried in its own ruins nearly a hundred years; until its restoration was undertaken by Ethelwold, Bishop of Winchester, in the reign of Edgar. This prelate is said to have been admonished in a dream, to repair to the monastery of St. Peter, in Mercia, and was divinely directed to the spot. His own devotion to the monastic system, and the ruinous condition in which many a consecrated spot lay, was sufficient to lead him to undertake a work so consonant to his feelings. But the simple-hearted historian of those early times was inclined to believe that such a work could only result from a divine monition, and, therefore, embellished his narrative with an incident which, perhaps, in many minds may have a tendency to invalidate the whole transaction.

Having cleared the area of the church, which he found had been converted into a receptacle for herds of cattle, Ethelwold returned to Winchester, to make preparations for the restoration of the monas-

tery. When offering up his fervent prayers to God, to incline the hearts of King Edgar and his queen to contribute their assistance to the work, he was overheard by the queen, who immediately interceded with the king; and Edgar consenting to patronise the work, Ethelwold completed the monastery, A.D. 970.

"The monastery," says Gunton, "being thus re-edified, King Edgar was desirous to see it, and went there accompanied by Dunstan, then Archbishop of Canterbury, and Oswald, Archbishop of York; and attended also by most of the nobility and clergy of England, who all approved and applauded both the place and work. But when King Edgar heard that certain charters and writings, which some monks had secured from the fury of the Danes, were found, he desired to see them; and finding, after perusing the privileges of this monastery, which were recorded in the writings, that he had a second Rome within his dominions, he wept for joy; and in the presence of that assembly he confirmed their former privileges and possessions, offering, together with his nobles and clergy, large oblations, consisting of lands, gold, and silver. At this assembly, the name of the place was changed from Medeshamsted to Burgh; and by reason of the fair buildings, pleasant situation, large

privileges, rich possessions, plenty of gold and silver, with which this monastery was endowed withal, there was an addition to the name, so as to be called Gildenburgh, though in reference to the dedication, it hath ever since been known by the name of Peterborough."*

Adulf, who had been chancellor to King Edgar, became the first abbot on the new foundation; and the circumstances which led him to exchange the stirring gaiety of the court for the quiet retirement of the cloister, were characteristic of the ἦθος of those days. It is said that Adulf having accidentally caused the death of his son, determined upon a penitentiary visit to St. Peter's Church at Rome: but having, in confession, imparted his intention to Ethelwold, the bishop dissuaded him from it, telling him that it would be better, if, instead of expending money in encountering so long a journey, he would turn his attention to St. Peter's Church at Burgh, and bestow upon the restoration of it that which he would have spent in going to Rome. Adulf consented to this arrangement, and after devoting all his wealth to the restoration of the monastery, he received the tonsure, and became abbot of Burgh, A. D. 972.

* Gunton's History of Peterborough, pp. 9. and 10.

During the abbacy of his successors, the monastery of Peterborough maintained a high reputation, and was enriched by frequent benefactions, possessing many estates, according to the Domesday survey, in the counties of Huntingdon, Bedford, Northampton, Lincoln, Leicester, and Nottingham. The Norman conquest, however, seriously affected this monastery, owing to the appointment of a Norman to the abbacy on the death of Brand, who having been seized with illness while accompanying Harold's army, retired to Burgh, and died there. The successor of Brand was Thorold, a Norman, who although he was utterly unknown to the monks, was, nevertheless, appointed to preside over them; and being a stranger to English habits and customs, he was regarded as an alien; and hence arose that want of cordiality and friendship, which usually existed between an abbot and his convent. But besides this, their appears to have been other and weightier matters of complaint alleged against the abbot. He is said to have been lavish in bestowing the property of the monastery upon those whom he thought would protect him against the apprehended attacks of rivals, but instead of adding to his security, it rather served to excite and foster an increased dislike to him.

It happened about this time that the Danes, under

the command of Earl Osbern, had taken possession of the Isle of Ely, and were there joined by Hereward, the nephew of Brand, who persuaded them to make an attack upon the monastery of Burgh, because the king had bestowed it upon a Norman. In consequence of this instigation, the monastery was attacked, the whole of the buildings were destroyed, except the church; and the monks, together with their riches and reliques, were carried off by the conqueror to the Isle of Ely. Thorold, who was absent at this attack, afterwards returned to the abbey, and erected a fortification near it; but notwithstanding all his precautions, he was overcome and taken prisoner, and an enormous sum was demanded for his release.

Thus between the plunder of the Danes, and the wanton profusion of the abbot, the monastery was much impoverished, and continued so until the death of Thorold, which happened about thirty years after his appointment. The buildings which had been destroyed by the incursion of the Danes, lay in ruins several years, until the abbacy of Ernulph, who restored them, and procured, at the same time, a confirmation of the lands and liberties belonging to the monastery. Ernulph was succeeded by John de Sais, and during his presidency, the abbey was again destroyed by fire, the whole monastery, except the

chapter-house and dormitory, being consumed. A.D. 1118, the abbot laid the foundation of a new church, the completion of which, however, he left to his successors.

The Abbot of Peterborough was one of those who were summoned to parliament, an honour which indicates the high estate of the monastery. But notwithstanding its high bearing, it appears to have been peculiarly exposed to those painful vicissitudes which form no inconsiderable feature in our national history. Robert de Sutton was elected abbot, A.D. 1262, and was unfortunately involved in the troubles which occurred in the civil wars during the reign of Henry the Third. A. D. 1264, the barons having fortified the town of Northampton against the king, the Abbot of Peterborough, contrary to the fidelity which he had sworn, joined in the defence of the place; and the king and his son seeing the banner of the abbey, among other ensigns, on the walls, vowed the destruction of the monastery. Through the mediation of friends, however, and the payment of a considerable sum of money, the abbot saved himself, as well as his monastery; and promised for the future to take part with the king. This agreement, which seemed to promise much security, was only the precursor of further troubles; for soon afterwards the battle of Lewes took place, in which

the king and prince Edward were taken prisoners, and the barons punished the defection of the abbey from their side by demanding a heavy fine from the abbot. During the whole of the contest, the hospitality of the monastery was continued, and partaken of by the partizans of either side: this apparent neutrality was, however, displeasing to the king; and after the battle of Evesham, where prince Edward overthrew the Earl of Leicester, and the whole of his army, a parliament being assembled at Winchester, the king demanded large sums from the English prelates, and other churchmen, and again fined the abbot of Peterborough. The sum total of the fines which the abbot was obliged to pay amounted, it is said, to no less a sum than £4324. 18s. 5d. In after times, royalty was occasionally entertained within the convent walls, and the rights and immunities of the monastery, were under royal patronage, preserved until the abbacy of John Borowe, or Burg, when on July 27th, 1534, this abbot, with John Walpoole, prior, and thirty-seven other monks, professed obedience to the king, and acknowledged him as supreme head of the Church in England. This submission, however, did not preserve the abbey from suppression, although it prolonged its existence; for in the year 1540 the abbey was surrendered into the king's hands, an

annuity of £260. 13s. 4d. being granted to the abbot, together with one hundred loads of wood out of the woods called Eastwood and Westwood. Upon the dissolution of the abbey, which occurred in the above-mentioned year, the king made a three-fold division of the revenues, reserving to himself one third part, assigning another third part to the maintenance of the bishop, a bishop's see having been created, and the remaining one to the dean and chapter. John Borowe, or Burg, who was the last abbot, was nominated the first bishop, and thus formed the connecting link between the monastic establishment of Medeshamsted and the bishopric of Peterborough.

Croyland Monastery.

Croyland, says William of Malmsbury, is one of the islands in that tract of east marshlands, which rising from the centre of the kingdom, and running upwards of one hundred miles, fall into the sea with their weight of waters, augmented by many rivers.* The origin of this abbey was owing to the celebrity

* It appears somewhat remarkable, that several of the largest and most important monasteries were similarly situated, as for instance in addition to Croyland, Thorney, Ely, Kirkstead, Osney, Medeshamstead, &c.

of Guthlac, a young man of considerable family, who having at the age of twenty-five, renounced the profession of arms, in which he had obtained considerable distinction, entered on a life of solitude, in which he passed ten years; and during this period, having received priest's orders, the chronicles of those early days inform us he was further endowed with the gifts of miracles and prophecy. His miracles continued to be wrought after his death, for according to the above authority, his body was preserved uncorrupted a whole year; and the monastery which was built over his remains, remained for many years uninjured by the vicissitudes, moral and physical, to which it was exposed. This monastery was founded by Ethelbald, who from the rank of an earl, succeeded to the throne of Mercia, through default of issue in his great uncle Penda's family. Having previously incurred the enmity of his cousin Ceolred, who governed Mercia from A.D. 709 to 716, this prince pursued him so unremittingly, that wearied and exhausted, he retired to that part of Mercia where Guthlac resided. He unfolded his tale of suffering and persecution to this holy man, and being comforted by the assurance of final success, which was to be brought about without battle or bloodshed, he vowed in return to found on that very spot a monastery in honour of God and Guthlac.

The death of Guthlac occurring shortly after, his remains were deposited at Croyland, and as soon as Ethelbald was seated on the throne of Mercia, he hastened to perform his vow; and for this purpose he sent for Kenulph, a monk of Evesham, and granted to him the whole island of Croyland, for the purpose of assembling and supporting a society of monks, exempting it for ever from all secular payments and services. This charter of endowment is dated A.D. 716, and after describing the different boundaries of the island, appointed Kenulph abbot, gave three hundred pounds in money, and a hundred pounds a-year for ten years, towards the monastic buildings, and added a permission to the monks to build and enclose a town. Croyland being almost entirely a marsh, Ethelbald is said to have caused an innumerable quantity of oaks and alders to be driven down as piles, and dry earth to be brought nine miles in boats, from Upland, to fill up the swamp before the building could be begun; and "thus," says Ingulf, "the wooden oratory of St. Guthlac was succeeded by a church of stone, and a succession of monastics established in it, which had continued without interruption to his time." He adds, there were at that time in the island four hermits, Cissa, Bettellin, Egbert, and Tatwin, who all lived in separate cells, near to the oratory of

Guthlac: in these, by Kenulph's leave, they were suffered to pass the remainder of their days. Pega, also, Guthlac's sister, within a year after her brother's death, leaving his psalter, with the whip of St. Bartholomew and other reliques, in the hands of abbot Kenulph, retired to her cell, about eight miles from her brother's oratory, where she continued two years and three months, and then went to Rome, and there died.

In the third year of his reign, Ethelbald having completed the endowment of Croyland monastery, promulgated an instrument, called "*Statutum Ethelbaldi*," by which all the monasteries and churches of his kingdom were relieved from all secular service, except the repair of castles and bridges. The successors of Ethelbald continued to patronise Croyland, extending the privileges which had previously been granted, and confirming its rights. The rule which was here observed was that of St. Benedict. Wiglaf, who was raised from the dukedom of the Wiccii, to the kingdom of Mercia, A.D. 825, granted a charter to this monastery, in which, after noticing his concealment from the pursuit of Egbert by Abbot Siward, in the cell of Etheldrith, for four months, he granted to the monastery the privilege of sanctuary within the five waters of Croyland. He also gave some of his robes and drinking vessels for the

use of the elder monks, and enjoined them to remember him in their prayers. He, moreover, paid an annual visit to the shrine of St. Guthlac, and always left behind him some donation. This monarch having reigned thirteen years, was succeeded by his brother Bertulph, who appears, at least in the beginning of his reign, to have shewn little favour to Croyland.* He is expressly charged with having plundered the monastery of all its jewels, the gifts of preceding kings, as well as of all its treasures, in order to carry on a war against the Danes. By way of recompense, however, he afterwards granted a charter of confirmation, and this became the means not only of procuring the favour of the monks which he had forfeited, but also of increasing the reputation of the monastery. Beorred succeeded Bertulph in the kingdom of Mercia, during whose reign Siward died, after having ruled the abbey of Croyland sixty-two years, and his successor in the abbacy was Theodore. In his time the Danes ravaged the whole country, but more especially Northumberland and Mercia, where their heathen fury appears to have been principally directed against monastic establishments. Earl Algar the younger, who took an active

* He, moreover, appears to have been a monster, procuring the assasination of his brother's grandson, for the sake of establishing himself on the throne of Mercia.

part in the wars, and who having been the friend of Siward, had now transferred his friendship to Theodore, about this period gave to the abbey the manor of Spalding, to procure the convent's prayers for his father's soul: and obtained a confirmation of this grant, as well as of the general possessions and privileges of the monastery A.D. 868. In the next year but one, this nobleman having assembled an army in these parts, at first made head against the Danes; but meeting with a reverse of fortune, and being himself slain in the conflict, the survivors of his army were pursued by the victors even to the doors of Croyland Church; and they, together with many of the monks who were assembled at their devotions, were cruelly put to death by their unrelenting foes.* The Danes broke open all the tombs in expectation of finding plunder, and being disappointed in their hopes, they laid the bodies on a heap, and setting fire to them, burnt the church and monastery to the ground. The monastery of Croyland long lay in ruins, until King Edred was induced to restore it at the earnest intreaty of Turketul, his chancellor, who withdrawing from the harrassing cares of worldly politics, retired to Croyland, and became the first abbot of the new foundation. He was succeeded by Egelric the elder, a person of great piety, and of considerable

* See Early English Church, p. 226.

industry, in the management of temporal affairs. He had been very serviceable to his predecessor, and during his life had completed the nave, and strengthened the tower of Croyland church. After Turketul's death he erected several additional structures in connexion with the monastery, and cultivated, when the seasons would permit, the fens belonging to the convent. By good management these yielded abundant crops, and the monastery became so rich, that the whole neighbourhood was relieved, and the vast influx of poor who resorted there, caused the adjoining town to be very populous. After thus holding the abbacy ten years, Egelric died, and was succeeded by his namesake, who was also a relative, and a great promoter of literature. He gave to the library of the monastery original works of different authors to the number of forty; and above a hundred lesser volumes of different treatises and histories.* He also gave vestments, hangings, and vessels for the altars and chapels, and eight missals. He also manifested his liberality in other ways; and having presided over the monastery eight years, he died A.D. 992. The next abbot was Osketul, who

* This, at first sight, appears so small a donation, that it was scarcely worth recording; but when we recollect the expense and trouble of procuring books in those days, and the difficulty of multiplying copies by means of the pen, it was, in fact, a most liberal donation, and would prove no small addition to the monastic library.

attained such celebrity by his extensive charities, as to be called "*The father of the poor.*" During his time the Danes renewed their ravages, and Croyland shared the fate of other religious houses, in being obliged to contribute subsidies towards resisting them. But the severest exactions were levied during the abbacy of his successor, Godric II. In his first year he paid King Ethelred two hundred marks, and two hundred more to his officers: and the same occurred in the second, third, and fourth years. It had now been the custom to pay four hundred marks annually, when the Danes landing in Lindsey, and burning villages and monasteries, and slaughtering all they met, caused great numbers to take refuge in Croyland, which was rendered inaccessible to the common enemy, in consequence of the marshes of the surrounding country being inundated with the heavy rains which had fallen. Sweyn, the leader of the ravagers, sent a messenger to the monastery, to demand a thousand marks, threatening that the abbey should be burnt, unless the money were paid by a certain day at Lincoln. Three months after the payment, a thousand marks were again demanded, and obtained for victualling the Danish army. These payments, together with the expenses incurred in supporting the great numbers who had taken refuge there, had exhausted their treasures and emptied

their granaries, when the king's officers demanded a fresh subsidy, and threatened to treat the abbot as a betrayer of his country, and a supporter of the Danes. Godric, terrified by these threats, assembled his convent, and having consulted with them, was determined to retain an officer of the Duke of Mercia, and as they had no money, to grant him lands and tenements for his life, on condition that he would protect them against the impending danger. Their choice fell on one Norman, a brother of the Earl of Leicester, and this arrangement protected the monastery until their retainer was killed in battle against Canute, A.D. 1017. Peace being restored in England at Canute's accession, Godric dismissed the monks of other houses who had sheltered themselves in his monastery, and died in the following year.

Our sketch will not admit of all the details of the history of this monastery; we therefore pass on to Ingulf, the historian, who was the fourth abbot in succession from Godric II. This celebrated man was appointed to the abbacy of Croyland by the Conqueror, and was admitted and consecrated by Archbishop Lanfranc A.D. 1076. Finding the affairs of the monastery in a ruinous state, his first care was to investigate them, and his enquiries led to the discovery that one Asford, who had been bailiff to his predecessor, had grown inordinately rich, and after

some hesitation he compelled him to produce his accounts, when it appeared that he claimed one of the manors belonging to the monastery as his own. A day being appointed for a legal investigation of this claim, at Stamford, Asford was proceeding there when his horse threw him, and broke his neck. As the body was carried to Peterborough for interment, in passing over some fields belonging to the abbey, which Asford had claimed, a sudden darkness and heavy rain came on, and the bier happening to break down at the same time, the body fell upon the earth; a circumstance which was considered as a miracle in favour of the monastery's claim, and not only convinced the family and relatives of Asford, but also prevented others from daring to encroach upon the patrimony of St. Guthlac. A.D. 1091 the abbey was destroyed by a fire, which was occasioned by the negligence of a plumber, who was employed to repair the tower of the church. The church, except the north transept, was entirely destroyed, together with chapter house, the dormitory, the refectory, the infirmary, the strangers' and convent's halls, the abbot's hall and chamber, and the library. The charter room, although it had a vaulted roof of stone, admitted the fire through the windows which were of wood, so that although the building was saved, yet most of the muniments were destroyed. The vestry, which

had a double roof of stone, and contained the vestments and reliques, and the transept of the church already mentioned, were the only parts of the structure which were preserved. The records which escaped were a few duplicates of Saxon charters, which Ingulf had ordered to be kept in the cloister, in order that the younger monks might be instructed in the Saxon characters, which had been brought into disuse by the Normans. This calamity was soon relieved by the exertions of their neighbours; but Ingulf only lived to make the necessary preparations for rebuilding the monastery, and the completion of his designs was left to Joffrid, who succeeded him in the abbacy, A.D. 1109, and who immediately commenced the rebuilding of the church and monastery with stone; and being assisted by the patronage and contributions of the wealthy, he carried it on with unremitting ardour; but an earthquake occurring in the year 1117, checked the work, and occasioned much injury to the building; but it was at length completed. A few years afterwards, the church was again destroyed by fire, and some of the offices were also injured; but the greatest part was immediately rebuilt in a magnificent manner, by Edward, who was abbot at the time.

Many of the succeeding abbots, who presided over the monastery previous to the dissolution,

beautified and rebuilt the buildings, which fell into decay, and were, in various other ways, considerable benefactors to the convent.

During the war between the houses of York and Lancaster, King Henry the Sixth came to Croyland to pay his devotions at the tomb of St. Guthlac. He stayed at the abbey three days, and was so much pleased with the devout behaviour of the convent, as to desire admission into the fraternity ; in return for which he bestowed upon the abbey a new charter of liberties. This, however, was not of much value, for the destruction of these institutions was not far distant. The last abbot was John Welles, *alias* Bridges, who, in 1534, with William Pinchbeck, prior ; Richard Slyford, prior of Freston ; Antony Overton, and twenty-seven other monks, subscribed to the king's supremacy. After which, continuing his abbacy till the dissolution in 1539, he joined, with the rest of the convent, in the surrender of their house : having obtained for himself a pension of £130. 6s. 8d. The revenues of this monastery, at the time of the dissolution, are said, by Bishop Tanner, to have amounted to £1083. 15s. 10d. The site was granted in the fourth year of King Edward the Sixth, to Edward, Lord Clinton. It now belongs, together with the manor and de-

mesne lands of Croyland, amounting to six thousand five hundred acres, to the family of Hunter.

Abingdon Monastery.

The monastery of Abingdon has attained very considerable celebrity, from the circumstance of its restoration being conducted under the auspices of St. Ethelwold, who was commissioned by King Edred to undertake it. This monastery appears to have been founded about A.D. 675, either by Cyssa, one of the officers of Centwin, King of the West Saxons, or by his nephew Heane; or, as it has been conjectured, the foundation may be attributed to their united piety. It was instituted in honour of the Blessed Virgin, for twelve monks, who were required to observe the Benedictine rule. There is a tradition that this monastery was one of those founded by King Lucius, and was afterwards destroyed by the Emperor Dioclesian; that the Emperor Constantine the Great received his early education in this house; and that there belonged to it five hundred monks, who lived, by the labour of their hands, in the woods and fields, and every Sunday and holiday resorted to the monastery to perform their devotions; and that besides these five

hundred, there remained constantly sixty monks attending the daily service and performance of mass. According to this tradition, Cyssa was only the second founder; but the tradition is evidently fabulous, and the first establishment may, therefore, be attributed either to Cyssa, or Heane, or to their united exertions.

It is supposed that the original site of the abbey was somewhere in the neighbourhood of Bagley Wood, either at Bayworth, in the parish of Sunningwell, or at Chilswell farm, in the parish of Cumnor. "The abbay," says Leland, "was first begon at Bagley Wood, in Barkshire, a two miles more upper on the Ise then Abingdon now is; but the foundations and the workes there prosperid not; whereapon it was translatid to Seukesham, and ther finishid most by the costes of King Cissa, that there after was buried; but the very place and tumbe of his burial was never knowen syns the Danes defacid Abingdon. I hard that ther was an holy hermite, kynne to King Cissa, that lyvid yn the woodes and marisches about Seukesham, and that the abbey, for his sake, and by his means, was builded there. Ethelwolde, Abbate of Abingdon, and after Bishop of Winchestre, yn King Edgare's days, did clerely renovate and augmentid this abbey,

digging and causing a gut to come out of Isis by force, to serve and purge the offices of the abbay."*

The hill on which this abbey originally stood was called Abendon, a name said to have been derived from one Aben, a Briton, who escaped from the massacre of Hengist, and retiring hither, led the life of an anchorite for many years. Ceadwall, however, the son and successor of Centwin, who added the town of Seovechesham to the possessions of the monks, is also said to have ordered their removal to it, and that then the name of Seovechesham, in consequence of its connexion with the monastery, was changed to Abingdon.

Ina, who succeeded Ceadwall, at first robbed the monastery of Abingdon of its possessions; but afterwards repenting, he not only restored what he had taken away, but also added to the endowments. Heane, whose name has been mentioned, together with that of Cyssa, as being one of the original founders of the monastery, was the first abbot, and he continued to preside over the abbey until the reign of Athelard, the successor of Ina, and, on his death, was succeeded by Cumanus, from whom the neighbouring village of Cumnor is said to have derived its name. Having flourished nearly two centuries, this abbey was destroyed by the Danes in the

* Leland, Itin. Edit. Oxon. 1770, vol. ii. p. 42.

reign of King Alfred; who completed the ruin of the monks, by taking away from them the town of Abingdon, and depriving them of the whole of their estates, because, as he alleged, they had not made a sufficient requital to him for vanquishing their enemies. Thus driven from their home, and despoiled of all their possessions, these unfortunate monks continued to exist as outcasts, until Edred, the grandson of King Alfred, being moved with compassion for the desolate condition of this monastery, as well as that of its former owners, commissioned Ethelwold to effect its restoration. Ethelwold accordingly undertook it; but the work was not completed until the reign of King Edgar, who, in consequence, has acquired the undeserved credit of restoring this abbey.

From the time of St. Ethelwold, who became the first abbot after the restoration of this monastery, until that of Thomas Pentecost, or Rowland, during whose abbacy it was surrendered, nearly fifty abbots presided over this house, several of whom were benefactors to it. Among these may be mentioned Fabricius, who having been a monk of Malmesbury, and a foreigner by birth, was, notwithstanding, presented by King Henry the First, A.D. 1100, to the abbacy of Abingdon. He was a man of considerable eminence in various branches of learning and science,

and was particularly skilled in the art of medicine, The services which, in this respect, he rendered to individuals, were, in two instances, rewarded by gifts to his monastery. In the seventh year of the reign of King Henry the First, Milo Crispin gave lands at Colebrook to the monastery, "for the service which the abbot Fabricius had rendered him in his sickness;" and the church at Kensington was granted to this abbey, under similar circumstances, by Geoffrey de Ver. Many royal grants were also made; and, during his time, Robert de Oilei restored to the monks their possessions at Tadmertune. This Robert de Oilei, who was a powerful Norman baron, afterwards founded Oseney Abbey, and, on his death, was buried at Abingdon. Besides these benefactions, which the abbey thus received during the life of Fabricius, he was himself also a considerable benefactor, having, it is said, built the east part, and a transept of a new church, which he adorned with marble pillars. The abbots who succeeded him were not men of any historical eminence, and the last was named Thomas Pentecost, or Rowland. This abbot was among the first to acknowledge the king's supremacy, A.D. 1534, and on February 9th, in 1538, with the other members of his convent, signed the surrender of the monastery. For his ready compliance in yielding to the wishes of the monarch, he

is said to have been rewarded with the manor of Cumnor, which had been his country-seat as abbot, for life, or until he could have preferment to the value of £223 a-year.* The revenues of this monastery, according to Dugdale, were valued, at the dissolution, at the sum of £1876. 10s. 9d. a-year, clear of deductions. This revenue enabled the convent to maintain considerable splendour. It was usual for the abbot to dine in the refectory on the following feast days, viz., The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord, The Epiphany, St. Vincent, The Purification, The Annunciation, Easter, The Ascension, Whitsunday, St. Peter and St. Paul, St. Ethelwold, The Assumption of St. Mary, and her Nativity, All Saints, the Conception, and St. John the Evangelist. On each of these feast days, the abbot always fed a hundred poor persons from his table. At the dissolution of this monastery, the site was granted in the first year of the reign of King Edward the Sixth, to Sir Thomas Seymour; and in the fifth year of the same reign, to Sir Thomas Wroth. There are no remains of the abbey church, although some ancient rooms belonging to the monastery are still in existence. These rooms are supported by vaults, with groined roofs, resting on short pillars. Two of these rooms, each thirty-four feet by fourteen,

* Mag. Brit., vol. i., p. 218.

have two large openings in the wall by which they are separated; the doorway has a pointed arch. In one of the rooms there is a fire-place, which has had slender pillars on each side, with octagonal shafts, and capitals of foliage, in the style of Henry the Third's reign. One of the shafts is gone. The windows of the room are of a more modern date.*

The abbey-gateway, still remaining near St. Nicholas' Church, has a large arch and a postern. Over the former is a canopied niche, with a statue; and in the spandrils are the royal arms of England, and the arms of the abbey.

St. Edmund's Bury Monastery.

According to Bishop Tanner, Sigebert, King of the East Angles, about A.D. 633, quitted his crown, and commenced a religious life in a monastery, which he had founded here: but after the death of that prince, we have no certain account of the state of this place, although it is probable that, as far as the interruptions of the Danish wars would permit, some sort of religious persons continued to live together, and to officiate in the church; for to this place, as being of some note, the body of Edmund, King of the East Angles, was translated from the obscure wooden

* Mag. Brit. vol. i., p. 211.

chapel at Hoxne, A.D. 903 ; immediately upon which, the town, which was called Bedericsworth, was changed to St. Edmundsbury ; and several secular priests settling here, built a new church in honour of the royal martyr. Leofric, Alfric, Bomfield, and Edmund, are said to have been the names of four of the priests ; and Leofric and Kenelm the names of two of the deacons who assisted them in their ministrations. The members of this community were at first not above seven or eight in number, but increased in a few years, to be nineteen ; viz., fourteen priests and five deacons, all having their several prebends, and became a perfect college about A.D. 925, when King Athelstan is said to have been their founder.

King Edmund, who, for his many virtues, as well as on account of his barbarous death, received the honours of canonization, was King of East Anglia at the time of the Danish invasion, under Hinguar and Hubba, A.D. 870. After committing many devastations, these pirates separated, and Hinguar is said to have proceeded to the place where King Edmund resided. The whole of his route is described as being through a burning country—the highways strewed with the victims of massacre, violated women, the husband expiring on his own threshold near his wife, and the infant torn from its

mother's bosom, and slain before her eyes, in order to increase her screams! As Hinguar drew near to the royal residence, he sent one of his countrymen to the king, with a haughty command to divide his treasures, submit to his religion, and reign in subjection to his will. "Who are you," added the imperious heathen, "that you should dare to withstand our power! The storm of the ocean deters not our proposed enterprize, but serves us instead of oars. Neither the loud roarings of the sky, nor its darting lightnings, have ever injured us. Submit, then, with your subjects, to a master whom even the elements respect."* On receiving the message, the king held a consultation with one of his bishops, who enjoyed his confidence, and who recommended a compliance, or else flight, as the only apparent means of saving his life. But the king refused to listen to this counsel; and on the Danish messenger being called in to receive the final determination, King Edmund addressed him with unwonted energy: "Stained," said he, "as you are, with the blood of my people, you deserve death; but I will imitate the example of him whom I venerate, and will not pollute my hands with your blood. Tell your commander I am neither terrified by his threats, nor deluded by his promises. Let his boundless cupidity, which no plun-

* Abbo Floriacensis, MSS. Cott. Tib. B. 1.

der can satiate, take and consume my treasures. You may destroy this frail and falling body, like a despised vessel, but I know that the freedom of my mind shall never for an instant bow before him. It is more honourable to defend our liberties with our lives, than to beg mercy with our tears. Death is preferable to servility. Hence my spirit shall fly to heaven from its prison, contaminated by no degrading submission. How can you allure me by the hope of retained power, as if I could desire a kingdom, when its population has been destroyed; or a few subjects, robbed of every thing that makes life valuable!"*

This reply exasperated the Dane, who was already master of his dominions, the king was taken without further contest. He was then bound in close fetters, and severely beaten, after which he was dragged to a tree, tied to its trunk, and lacerated with whips. The Danes then aimed their arrows at his body; and at length Hinguar put an end to his sufferings by beheading him. That every indignity might be shewn to the royal sufferer, the Danes are said to have thrown the severed head and body of the king into the thickest part of the woods of Eglesdene. After their departure, the East Anglians having discovered the body, buried it at Hoxne: but the head

* Sharon Turner's History of the Anglo-Saxons, vol. 1, p. 516.

could not be found. Seeking after the head, however, in the woods, some of them who had lost their companions, cried "Where are you?"—when a voice, it is said, was heard to answer, "Here, here, here!" and in the place whence the voice proceeded, the long-sought-for head was found, in a thicket of thorns, guarded by a wolf. This, which was considered as one of the principal miracles of St. Edmund, was a favourite subject of representation with the monks, and occurs both in sculptures, and on one or two of the conventual seals.

The monastery of St. Edmunds' Bury being honoured with the remains of one whose memory was long held in high estimation, and whose name is still retained in our calendar,* became augmented after the reign of King Athelstan, both in its revenues and privileges; and the names of King Edmund, the son of King Edward the elder, Theodred, Bishop of London, and King Edwy, appear among the earliest benefactors.

Upon pretence that the seculars, who had the charge of the body of St. Edmund, were careless in their duty, King Canute removed them, and A.D. 1020, placed in the monastery of St. Edmunds' Bury a convent of Benedictine monks, partly brought from St. Bennet's of Hulme, in Norfolk, and partly from

* Nov. 20.

Ely, in Cambridgeshire. This was in the fourth year of King Canute; under whose direction Ailwin, Bishop of Elmham, in the same year, pulled down the wooden church, which was first built for the reception of St. Edmund's body, and laid the foundation of another, which bore the name of the saint. This church was finished in about twelve years; the inhabitants of Norfolk and Suffolk paying fourpence yearly for every carucate* of land towards the expense. It was consecrated on St. Luke's day, A.D. 1032, by Egelnoth, Archbishop of Canterbury, and dedicated to Christ, St. Mary, and St. Edmund.

In addition to his grants, King Canute showed a preference for this church, by performing his personal devotions there. He offered his own crown at the tomb of the saint, whose body had been deposited in a rich shrine; and his example upon this occasion is said to have been followed by succeeding monarchs.

Ailwin, Bishop of Elmham, is said to have diminished his own privileges, in order to augment the power and authority of the new abbot and convent of St. Edmund's Bury; he granted that the monastery, and the town, as given by King Edmund, with the extent of a mile around it, should be no longer

* A carucate of land contained as much as could be tilled by one plough.

subject to the episcopal authority or jurisdiction of the bishop of the diocese. The monks, it is added, erected four crosses, one at each extremity of the town, to define accurately the boundary and extent of their exempt jurisdiction; and within which the abbot himself was to exercise episcopal authority. Hardicanute, the son and successor of Canute, confirmed and ratified the exemption of the abbot and convent from episcopal jurisdiction.

Uvius, who had been prior of St. Bennet's of Hulme, was the first Abbot of St. Edmund's Bury. He carried with him to his new monastery not only half the monks of St. Bennet's of Hulme, but half the furniture, books, vestments, vessels, ecclesiastical ornaments, and, in short, all that could be divided. Leofstan, one of the monks who had accompanied Uvius from Hulme, was the second abbot of St. Edmund's Bury, and presided over the monastery during the greater part of the reign of King Edward the Confessor.

When King Edward the Confessor visited this monastery, he was accustomed to perform the last mile of his journey on foot as a common pilgrim; so great was the veneration which he entertained for the royal saint, whose sanctuary he was approaching. On one of his visits, the king is said to have found the young monks of the monastery eating

barley bread; and enquiring of the abbot why these, whom he called the young men of his kinsmen, were no better fed, he was answered that the possessions of the monastery were too weak to maintain them with stronger food. "Ask what you will," said the king, "and I will give it to you, that they may be better provided for, and better enabled to perform the service of God. The abbot having consulted with his monks, is stated to have asked of the king the manor of Mildenhall, with its appurtenances, and the jurisdiction of the eight hundreds and a half, with all the royalties afterwards called the Franchise. The king replied that the request was indiscreet, because the grant of these liberties was likely to involve the abbot and his successors in continual trouble; that he would willingly have granted him three or four manors, if he had required them; but he would, nevertheless, out of respect to his kinsman, grant this request, however indiscreet.

Abbot Leofstan died A.D. 1065, and Baldwin, a monk of St. Denis, at Paris, then prior of Deerhurst, in Gloucestershire, a cell of St. Denis, was his successor. It is said he was "gretly expert in crafft off medycyne," and King Edward the Confessor probably derived benefit from his skill, as he received from that monarch the distinguished privilege of a mint for his monastery. He was also greatly in favour

with King William the Conqueror, from whom he obtained many considerable grants for his monastery.

The church of the monastery, consecrated A.D. 1032, having been, for the most part, like its predecessor, built of wood, was considered to be unworthy both of St. Edmund, and of an establishment endowed with magnificent revenues. Accordingly, under the auspices of Abbot Baldwin, the church, which had been comparatively but recently constructed, was demolished. The Conqueror, upon this occasion, issued his precept to the Abbot of Peterborough, commanding that the abbot and convent of St. Edmund should be permitted to take sufficient stone, for the erection of their church, from the quarries of Barnack, in Northamptonshire, granting, at the same time, an exemption from the tolls chargeable upon its carriage from thence to the place of its destination.

During the abbacy of Baldwin, it appears the first confirmation of the privileges of the monastery were obtained from Rome, from Pope Alexander II. Subsequent renewals were granted, and about sixty papal bulls were at different times received for the confirmation and enlargement of the privileges of the place. The precise nature of these privileges cannot be ascertained; but they seem to have consisted

chiefly in an exemption from episcopal visitations, and the consequent and usual designations of subordination and submission. A bull of Pope Calixtus II. declares that the monks shall receive from a Catholic bishop the chrism, the holy oil, the consecration of altars, churches, &c., the ordination of monks, and other episcopal duties. The bulls of Pope Gregory IX. explain the exemptions more at large. One ordains that no person, except the Roman pontiff, or his legate, shall, in the town of St. Edmund, or within the four crosses, claim to himself any power or right, or celebrate any public mass, or build any monastery, oratory, or chapel, or hold any synod, or exercise any episcopal office. The privilege of exemption from the effect of a general interdict upon the country was also granted, by a bull from Pope Alexander III., who, upon such occasion, permitted the abbot and convent, with doors shut, the interdicted and excommunicated being excluded, without ringing the bells, and with a low voice, to celebrate divine offices. Abbot Baldwin procured the first of these bulls at Rome in person, where Pope Alexander II. received him with distinguished honour; gave him a pastoral staff and ring; delegated to him the cure of souls, and presented to him a porphyry altar, accompanied by a privilege not altogether unlike that granted by his successor,

Pope Alexander III. The solemnity of the mass was not to cease in the monastery while that altar remained there, on any prohibition whatever, unless the pope should interdict it expressly by name.

The edifice of the new church of St. Edmund's Bury was completed A.D. 1095, and in the following year the body of St. Edmund was removed into it, this being the last recorded removal of the body of the saint.

Abbot Baldwin died A.D. 1098, and the abbacy being still vacant at the accession of King Henry the First, that monarch immediately appointed Robert, the son of Hugh, Earl of Chester, a monk of St. Ebrulf, as his successor; but the monks resisting his appointment, he was deposed A.D. 1102, by Archbishop Anselm, in a council held at London, because, it is said, he had presumed to accept the appointment without the canonical election of the monks. After a vacancy of five years, a second abbot, of the name of Robert, was elected, who had been previously prior of Westminster. It is said that, during his abbacy, the ancient stone church of St. Mary, in Bury, was pulled down to extend the foundation of the right wing of the new monastery; and was rebuilt by Geoffrey, the then sacristan, at the south-west corner of the cemetery. This same Geoffrey is stated, also, to have built the refectory,

the chapter-house, the infirmary, and the abbot's hall.*

After the death of Abbot Robert, which took place A.D. 1112, nothing interesting occurred in this monastery until the abbacy of Samson de Botington, or Totington, a native of Norfolk, who was consecrated abbot A.D. 1182. He had previously been a monk and sub-sacristan of the abbey. Great improvements were effected, in his time, in the abbey buildings and offices, under the direction of the sacristans, Hugh, Walter de Banham, and Robert de Gravele.

Soon after Abbot Samson's election, he granted a charter to the burgesses of Bury explanatory of their customary services and liberties. Some of the abbots, in earlier times, had made concessions, upon the authority of which the townsmen were anxious to erect themselves into an independent guild or corporation ; and hence, succeeding abbots had to contend with the burgesses, who, century after century, were incessant in their attempts to do away with the jurisdiction of the superior lord. These contests were carried on with much heart-burning, and were sometimes attended by consequences of a very serious nature to the monastery. It appears, from the annals of this monastery,† that, A.D. 1190, the mas-

* Antiq. S. Edmund, Burgi. Batteley, pp. 57, 58.
‡ MSS. Harl. 1332.

sacre of the Jews who came to the coronation of King Richard the First, was in some degree imitated here, and that those Jews who survived were afterwards banished. The Jews had, apparently, previously lived on good terms with the monks, and had even deposited their money in the treasury of the monastery, as in a bank. This, however, was probably the cause of the quarrel, since the Jews, at that period, were notoriously oppressive in their demands of usurious interest.

King Richard the First is said to have paid a visit of devotion to the shrine of St. Edmund, previously to setting out on the crusade; and Abbot Samson is stated to have offered his services to the king in accompanying him on the expedition; but they were declined in consequence of the Bishop of Norwich telling the king that it was neither expedient for the state, nor safe for the counties of Norfolk and Suffolk, that the Bishop of Norwich and the Abbot of St. Edmund's Bury should be both absent at the same time.*

It was in this king's reign that Eleanor, queen-consort of Henry the Second, remitted to the convent a fine of one hundred marks, which were due to her, accepting in lieu a gold cup, which, however, she returned as an offering for the soul of her de-

* Yates' Hist. of St. Edmund's Bury, part 1, p. 144.

ceased lord, who had originally presented it to St. Edmund.*

King John confirmed the liberties of the monastery in the first year of his reign. He was at St. Edmund's Bury, A.D. 1201. Two years afterwards, he came again, performed his devotions at the shrine of St. Edmund, and made some valuable offerings. It appears, however, that the motives which conferred on the royal saint the honour of this visit were not altogether of a religious character; since the monarch prevailed upon the abbot and convent to grant him, during his life, the use of the valuable jewels, which his mother, Queen Eleanor, had presented to St. Edmund.

A.D. 1205, the earls and barons who were in opposition to the king, held a general assembly here: and A.D. 1208, at the promulgation of the interdict, when King John seized many of the ecclesiastical revenues, he made a special reservation in favour of St. Edmund's Bury.

Abbot Samson died A.D. 1211, and upon his death the abbacy, having remained vacant two years, was given by the king to Nicholas, Bishop of Tusculum.

During the vacancy which occurred in the abbacy, on the death of Abbot Walpole, which happened

* Chron. Jocelini de Brakelonda, F. 133.

A.D. 1256, some Franciscan friars made their appearance at Bury, where they remained sometime without any settled habitation; but at length having obtained a grant from Pope Alexander IV., which permitted them to occupy any land they might be able to obtain, and relying upon this authority, they procured a situation in the north part of the town, and presumed, during the night, and in an unconsecrated place, to perform divine service, and to celebrate mass. The monks, astonished at this intrusion, were much troubled, especially as they had lately lost their abbot, and were destitute of the advice of a pastor. Some of the officers of the monastery, therefore, undertook to admonish the friars: but this failing of its desired effect, the dependents of the monks proceeded to demolish the buildings which the friars had erected, and expelled them from the town. The friars now applied to the court of Rome for redress, when the pope not only reprimanded the monks, but directed the Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Dean of Lincoln to put the friars in possession of a plot of ground, in the west part of the town. After much altercation, the friars were put in possession; but both parties mutually harassed each other by vexatious proceedings at law. When the friars were eventually put in possession of the plot of ground already alluded to, they imme-

diately commenced the building of a suitable edifice, and retained it as a place of residence six years. On the death of Pope Alexander, and the succession of Urban IV. to the papacy, the monks made another application to the see of Rome. Urban revoked all the bulls of his predecessor, and peremptorily commanded not only that the buildings erected by the friars should be demolished, but that they should also quit the town within a month. The friars finding the victory of the monks complete, deputed certain of their brethren to make submission; who in the presence of the abbot and the whole convent, upon the eve of the martyrdom of St. Edmund, A.D. 1263, publicly renounced their right to the spot which they had occupied. Peace being restored, the abbot and convent granted to the friars a small plot of pasture ground, without the bounds and jurisdiction of the town, upon which they constructed another house, and where they remained till the dissolution.* In the following year, the convent was engaged in a contest with a different class of opponents. An association of some of the younger burgesses, calling themselves a guild, occasioned so much dissension respecting the keepers of the town gates, that the abbot applied for redress to the king, who granted a writ of inquiry; but some of the

* MSS. Harl. 638.

elder, and more discreet townsmen, apprehending that the event of this action might prove injurious to the liberties they already enjoyed under the monastery, prevailed upon the abbot to desist from the prosecution, and to appoint a commission to inquire into all the injuries the convent had sustained; promising that whoever were found guilty should make a competent satisfaction; that the guild should be annulled; and that all who refused to comply with these terms should be expelled the town. Upon the inquisition being held, it was found that the burgesses had shut the north gate against the abbot, and the south gate against the sacristan and the cellarer; that they had made an assault upon the great gate of the abbey; that they had broken the gate of the churchyard; that they had pursued the servants of the monks even to the altar; and they had formed themselves into a guild, contrary to ancient custom. The guild, therefore, was decreed to be dissolved; and in consideration of the grievances complained of by the abbot, forty pounds of silver were ordered to be paid to him; the abbot, at the same time, reserving to himself the liberty of proceeding against any of the offenders.

King Henry the Third several times visited the monastery of St. Edmund. A royal mandate was issued, dated from Bury, 1st September, 36 Henry

III., commanding that bakers should not impress their bread, intended for sale, with the sign of the Cross, Agnus Dei (Lamb of God), or the name of our Lord; a practice derogatory to the honour of those sacred emblems.* When civil commotions distracted the kingdom at a subsequent period of his reign, that monarch appointed Bury as a general rendezvous of his friends and supporters, and summoned the barons who owed military service to the crown, to meet him. They accordingly assembled in military array at Bury; where they were soon afterwards joined by the king. After the lapse of a few years, King Henry the Third held a parliament at Bury; from whence he also proceeded to quell an insurrection at Norwich; and during his stay at this monastery, on his return, A.D. 1272, he was seized with the disorder which terminated his life.

On the death of Abbot Luton, the successor of Walpole, which happened A.D. 1279, King Edward the First seized upon the possessions of the convent, and for some time retained them; but he at length restored them to John de Norwold, the next abbot, and afterwards, together with Queen Eleanor, honoured the monastery with a visit. A document is still in existence, which gives a very minute account

* Prynne, Papal Usurp. tom ii., p. 783.

of the weekly expenditure of the monastery about this period. The establishment at this time appears to have consisted of eighty monks, one hundred and eleven servants resident in the monastery, and eleven chaplains : the portion for the nuns of Thetford, who received a part of their maintenance from the monastery, and the ordinary reception of guests being likewise provided for in the calculation. The "Firma Sancti Edmundi," — under which designation the abbot's portion, or account, appears to be intended, was kept distinct. The weekly expenditure in the bakehouse and brewery of the convent, including servants' wages and fuel, amounted to £13. 0s. 9½d ; the weekly expense in the "Firma Sancti Edmundi" for the same was £11. 5s. 9d. In the kitchen ten pounds a week were expended in the purchase of flesh, fish, eggs, cheese, &c. exclusive of the cellarer's purveyance, which amounted in the year to £43. 8s. 8d. The expense in the kitchen of the "Firma Sancti Edmundi" amounted to £4. 15s. 7d. a-week. The annual amount of payments for fuel in the kitchen of the abbot and convent generally was £30. The provender for the horses of the prior, cellarer, and hospitaller, cost £60. in the year ; and the other miscellaneous expenses of the cellarer, £60. more. This was the whole domestic expenditure of the monastery for the support of its regular

inhabitants, and the maintenance of ordinary hospitality, towards the latter end of the thirteenth century.* The expenditure of other monasteries, at this period, was probably much the same, in proportion to their size and revenues, although we have not got similar authentic documents with regard to it.

A.D. 1292, a renewal of the disputes between the Abbey of St. Edmund and the town took place, but they were adjusted by commissioners, who decided according to what had been the usual custom from the time of King Edward the Confessor. Various disputes, however, afterwards arose, and, A.D. 1327, the abbey was almost reduced to a heap of ruins. The great mass of the townsmen, headed by their aldermen and chief burgesses, and joined by an immense force collected from the neighbouring towns and villages, made three attacks upon the monastery and its possessions; sacking and burning the abbey buildings, plundering the ornaments, charters, and treasures, and extending their depredations to a great number of the manors which belonged to it. Several of the townsmen, taking Peter de Clopton, the prior, and about twenty monks, to the chapter-house, compelled them to execute, under the abbey seal, several deeds injurious to the rights and privileges of the monastery. A military force was sent to put

* Monasticon, vol. iii. p. 117.

down the riot, and twenty-four of the chief burgesses were apprehended and imprisoned; thirty carts full of the rioters were taken to Norwich, and nineteen or twenty of the most notorious offenders were executed. The inquiries which arose out of this violent affair appear to have occupied almost the five following years. The final decision was given by a decree of King Edward the Third, and his council, A.D. 1332. The justices awarded one hundred and forty thousand pounds damages; but, at the instance of the king himself, the whole was remitted, except two thousand marks; the payment of which was to be made within twenty years, by disbursements of a hundred marks a year.

It is said that several who had been convicted of taking part in this outrage, being much incensed at the abbot, for breaking, as they alleged, a promise which he had made to them in London, conspired against him, and invaded the manor of Chevington, where he was residing. They robbed and bound him they then shaved him, and carried him away to London; where they removed him from street to street, till they could convey him over the Thames into Kent, and over sea to Dist, in Brabant; where they kept him in much misery. At length they were all excommunicated by the Archbishop of Canterbury, and afterwards by the pope. At last, it being

known where the abbot was, he was rescued by his friends, and brought home with a procession. The troubles, however, of the monastery were not at an end; for besides domestic broils, in which the convent was, from time to time, engaged, it suffered from the tumults which occurred during the reign of Richard the Second. A.D. 1381, the rabble of Norfolk and Suffolk, under a leader who assumed the name of Jack Straw, made a simultaneous movement with the Kentish insurgents, under Wat Tyler, in the hope of effecting a general rebellion. Their numbers are stated to have amounted to fifty thousand. Having seized Sir John Cavendish, the lord chief justice of the King's Bench, at his country-seat, they brought him to Bury, where they beheaded him. They next attacked the monastery of St. Edmund. John de Cambridge, the prior, was seized at the manor of Mildenhall, and beheaded, and his body was left naked in the fields for five days, none daring to bury it for fear of the rioters. His head was placed upon the pillory, by that of Sir John Cavendish.

John de Lakynghithe, the keeper of the barony of St. Edmund, was seized in the abbey cloister, whence having been dragged to the market-place of Bury, his head was struck off, and placed with those of his friends. The rioters then plundered the abbey,

taking away a cross of gold, a rich chalice, and jewels and ornaments to the value of a thousand pounds. Some of the townsmen, at this time, joined the rioters; and re-asserting their former claims, compelled the monks to execute a renunciation of their privileges, and to place the entire government of the town in the hands of the aldermen and burgesses. The dispersion of the rioters, however, of itself put an end to an obligation so illegally procured, and this was the only satisfaction which the monastery on this occasion obtained.

In the following century this monastery was again honoured with the presence of royalty, since A.D. 1433, King Henry the Sixth stayed here from Christmas to St. George's day. Great preparations having been made for the reception of the royal guest, the aldermen and burgesses of Bury dressed in scarlet, accompanied by the commons of the town, who also wore a red livery, met the king to the number of five hundred, upon Newmarket heath; and brought him within the precinct of the monastery by the south gate. Here he was received by the whole convent, the Abbot and Bishop of Norwich appearing in full pontificals. The abbot sprinkling the king with holy water, presented a cross to his lips. A procession was then formed, accompanied with music, to the high altar of the church, after which the king

paid his devotions at St. Edmund's shrine, and then passed to the abbot's palace. He shortly afterwards removed to the prior's lodging, as it was more conveniently situated for enjoying the sports of the field: here he remained until January 23, when he removed, with his train, to the abbot's manor of Elmswell, where he was entertained in the most sumptuous manner; returning, however, to the monastery on the eve of the Purification, to celebrate that festival; and then again returning to the manor. The whole of Lent was passed by the king in the prior's lodgings; but he solemnized the festival of Easter in the palace of the abbot. When the time arrived for his departure, the king, attended by his uncle, the Duke of Gloucester, and others of his nobility, met the convent in the chapter-house of the monastery, where his majesty was solemnly admitted into the fraternity of the place, receiving the usual kiss from the abbot. Having taken the abbot by the hand, and returned thanks for his reception, the king took his leave, earnestly recommending himself and his train to God and St. Edmund, and to the prayers of the abbot and his brethren.

William Babyngton became abbot A.D. 1446, and was president of the Benedictine order in England. In the following year, on the feast of St. Scholastica, Feb. 10, a parliament was held at Bury, at which

the king presided in person, sitting in a chair of state, in the refectory of the monastery. The pretext for assembling this parliament was a proposal for an interview between the English and French monarchs; but the real motive was the destruction of Humphrey Duke of Gloucester. The duke was arrested, and preparations were made for his impeachment; but on the morning appointed for his trial, he was found dead in his bed. Apoplexy was assigned as the cause of his death; but the unpopularity of the duke with the court party, and the violence with which the annals of those days is stained, give a great degree of probability to a tradition which prevails, that the duke did not die from natural causes, but that he was imprisoned and murdered in an apartment of St. Saviour's hospital, then an appendage to the monastery.

At the commencement of the following century, the storm which was about to sweep off the monastic system of this country began to lower over the venerable monastery of St. Edmund. The blow which threatened this establishment was endeavoured to be averted; for A.D. 1536, we find that the abbot and convent granted to Thomas, afterwards Lord Cromwell, and to his son Gregory, or the survivor of them, an annuity of ten pounds. In November, however, 1539, notwithstanding many concessions,

Abbot Melford, who at that time presided over the abbey, was compelled to surrender his monastery into the hands of King Henry the Eighth. An annual pension of one hundred marks was granted him, and he retired to a small dwelling in Bury. He is supposed to have fallen a victim to the severity of the change, as he very soon sunk under the weight of disappointment and sorrow, and survived the degradation of his order and the loss of his abbey but a few months.

The revenues of this monastery were valued, shortly before the dissolution, according to Dugdale, at £1659. 13s. 11½d. The site, circuit, and precinct of St. Edmund's Bury Monastery, were granted by letters patent of Queen Elizabeth, dated 1560, to John Eyer, Esq., in consideration of the sum of £412. 19s. 4d.

The church, constructed in the form of a cross, had two octagon towers, and a centre tower, at the west point, and another tower between the nave and the choir. At the east end, which was circular, was St. Edmund's shrine, richly adorned with gold and jewels. The walls of the church were of flint and boulder, immensely thick, cased with hewn stone from Barnack quarries in Northamptonshire. The abbey precinct was enclosed by a lofty wall. Of three gates of entrance, the principal one, which

opened into a court-yard in front of the abbot's palace, still remains, a rich relic of the former magnificence of the abbey.*

Tewkesbury Monastery.

Two Mercian dukes, named Oddo and Doddo, are said to have founded a monastery, A.D. 715, upon their own estate, near the river Severn, in Gloucestershire, on a spot where one Theokus, a hermit, had resided, and from whence the name of Theokesbury, or Tewkesbury, is supposed to have been derived. These noblemen granted the manor of Stanwey, with its members, and certain other smaller possessions, for the support of the monks; dedicating their new structure to the Virgin Mary. The monks who at this early period inhabited the monastery were not more than four or five in number. Besides founding this monastery, Oddo and Doddo were great benefactors to Pershore Abbey, where their bodies are said to have been interred. The next patron of the monastery of Tewkesbury whom we read of, was one Hugh, also a Mercian nobleman, who, A.D. 799, caused the body of Brihtric, King of the West Saxons, to be brought here for interment; and was also himself buried here, A.D. 812. Having under-

* Monasticon, vol. iii., p. 98, et seq.

gone many calamities during the Danish and civil wars of that period, and having been twice consumed by fire, Tewkesbury, about A.D. 980, was subjected as a cell by its then patron, Haylward Mere, to his newly-founded priory of Cranburne, in Dorsetshire: in which subordinate condition it remained more than one hundred and twenty years.

At the time of the conquest, the seignory of Gloucester, which, during the reign of Edward the Confessor, had belonged to Brihtric, the grandson of this Haylward, was confiscated, and with the patronage of the two monasteries of Cranburne and Tewkesbury, was vested in the crown.

The Church of Tewkesbury had a separate endowment, consisting of seven hides of land in Stanwey, four in Tatington, three in Limentone, three in Waseborne, two in Fitentone, one in Ætone, and four and a half in Stanley: making a total of twenty-four hides and a half, valued in the time of Edward the Confessor, at the annual sum of twenty-four pounds ten shillings, which, from causes unexplained, had, in the time of the Conqueror, fallen to a revenue of twenty pounds.

Early in the reign of King Henry the First, Robert Fitz Haimon, a Norman nobleman, who came over with the Conqueror, and to whom King William Rufus had granted Brihtric's estates, as well

as the patronage of the two monasteries of Tewkesbury and Cranburne, was persuaded by the entreaties of his wife, and those of Girald, Abbot of Cranburne, to rebuild the church at Tewkesbury, which had fallen into decay, and to endow it with lands yielding an ample revenue. And since Tewkesbury was, in many respects, superior in point of situation to Cranburne, he determined to leave only a prior and two monks there, and remove the rest of the society to Tewkesbury, together with Girald, their abbot, whom he appointed abbot of the latter monastery.

Girald, who had originally been a monk of Winchester, did not enjoy his new honours long; he was appointed to the abbacy of Tewkesbury, A.D. 1102, and in 1109, refusing to gratify the covetous temper of King Henry the First, he was compelled to leave his abbey, and retire again to Winchester. A.D. 1107, Robert Fitz Haimon, the founder of the monastery, died in consequence, it is said, of a blow upon the temple, which he received from a lance two years before at the re-taking of Falaise, in Normandy. Upon his death, King Henry being unwilling that so fine an inheritance should be divided between coheiresses, married his natural son, Robert, whom he created Earl of Gloucester, to Mabyle, Robert Fitz Haimon's eldest daughter; making Cecil and Hawise, the second and third daughters, abbesses of Shaftes-

bury and Winchester; and marrying Amice, the fourth daughter, to the Earl of Bretagne.

Roger, the fourth abbot in succession from Girald, died A.D. 1161, after having presided over the monastery upwards of twenty-four years. During his abbacy, Robert, Earl of Gloucester, above mentioned, built a priory, on his own demesne at Bristol, and dedicated it to St. James; endowing it with lands and possessions, and making it subject as a cell to the abbacy of Tewkesbury. Fromund was appointed to succeed Roger, A.D. 1162, and during his administration, the monastery, as well as the town of Tewkesbury, received further marks of the royal favour; for during the life-time of his father, King Henry the Second, John, who had succeeded to the earldom of Gloucester, by the will of William, the second earl, who left no male issue, and who also married Isabel, William's youngest daughter, granted two charters to the abbey, and in the following reign, before he came to the throne, he built the long bridge in the town, giving the whole toll of his market there for its reparation. Royal favour, however, can afford no protection against the elements; and A.D. 1177, or in the following year, it is said the church and monastic buildings of Tewkesbury were destroyed by fire. We have no account of the rebuilding of the monastery, and it is, therefore, proba-

ble that the destruction was only partial, and such as could be remedied without much difficulty.

The succeeding abbots afford but little interesting matter for our notice, until we come to the abbacy of John de Streynsham, who received his appointment, A.D. 1468. During his presidency, the fatal battle of Tewkesbury was fought between the forces of King Henry the Sixth and King Edward the Fourth, in which the Lancastrians were completely routed, and the Duke of Somerset, and about twenty other persons of distinction, having, after their defeat, taken refuge in the church of Tewkesbury, were dragged out and immediately beheaded. The remains of the unfortunate Prince Edward, only son of King Henry the Sixth, who was stabbed in cold blood after this battle, are said to lie under a large grey marble slab, stripped of its brasses, at the entrance of the choir of Tewkesbury Church, under the rood loft.

The last Abbot of Tewkesbury was John Wick, or Wakeman, who, in January, 1539, surrendered up his monastery, and was afterwards consecrated to the see of Gloucester, which had been newly founded by King Henry the Eighth. At the time of its suppression, this monastery was possessed of an annual revenue, according to Dugdale, amounting to £1598. 1s. 3d. The site was granted in the thirty-sixth year of King Henry the Eighth, to Thomas Strowde,

Walter Earle, and James Paget. The cloisters, chapter-house, &c., of this monastery, are reported to have been burnt down by the king's visitors, on account, it is said, of the monks pretending to resist them at their first coming. Rudder says, it appears by an ancient deed, transcribed into an old council book, that before, and at the dissolution, the body of the abbey church was used as the parish church, and that the parish purchased of the king the chancel, steeple and bells, with the clock and chimes, for £483.*

Tewkesbury Church is built in the cathedral style. It consists of a nave, choir, transept, and square central tower: with several side chapels, or oratories, branching from the north and south aisles of the choir. The greater part of the building is of Norman construction. The nave and choir are separated from the aisles by massive columns, with circular arches; and four piers support the tower. The arches above the columns in the nave are plain and semicircular; but those of the choir are pointed. The windows on the sides of the nave seem to have been altered when the choir was raised, about the beginning of the fourteenth century. At the west end is a large window, with a pointed arch, which appears to have been introduced within a semicircular arch, in 1656. The

* Hist. Glouc. p. 745.

east end of the church is hexagonal; being separated from the aisles by six short columns supporting pointed arches. Over these arches are windows filled with stained glass. The lady chapel, which is said to have extended a hundred feet more to the east, is entirely destroyed: though the large arch, through which it was entered from the church, is still visible on the outside. There are few of our churches which contain a greater number of ancient tombs, or such as are more likely to be interesting to an antiquary.*

Chester Monastery.

The early history of the monastery of Chester is involved in much obscurity, which is in no small degree increased by the fabulous inventions of some of our early chroniclers; it is, however, generally believed that before the end of the seventh century a bishop's see, for part of the Mercian dominions, was placed in Chester. This see was sometimes under different, but, for the most part, under the same bishops with Lichfield; and to that see at length it was united. After the conquest, Bishop Peter, and his successor, Robert de Limesy, removing wholly from Lichfield, fixed their residence, for almost

* Monasticon, vol. 2. p. 53.

thirty years, at Chester; but Bishop Robert afterwards giving the preference to the rich monastery at Coventry, made that one of his cathedrals, and left Chester; which, however, was not finally abandoned, as several of the Bishops of Lichfield and Coventry wrote themselves, and are styled by others, Bishop of Chester.*

"In this city," says Bishop Tanner, "there was, pretty early in the Saxon times, a religious house, probably a nunnery, and dedicated to St. Peter and St. Paul, whither, as to a place of safety, the remains of St. Werburgh were brought from Heanburg, A. D. 875. But this monastery was ruined by the wars, or injury of time, and in the reign of King Athelstan was re-edified, for secular canons, by the noble Elfleda, Countess of Mercia; and afterwards it was more amply endowed by the munificence of King Edmund, King Edgar, Earl Leofric, and other benefactors, in honour of the royal virgin, St. Werburgh."† The canons of St. Werburgh at the time when the Domesday survey was made, held thirteen houses free from tax of any kind in Chester; one being appropriated to the warden of the church, and the rest belonging to the canons.

A. D. 1093, at the instigation of Anselm, after-

* Ormerod's History of Chester, vol. i. pp. 71, 72.

† Notitia Monastica, Chester 2.

wards Archbishop of Canterbury, Hugh Lupers, Earl of Chester, expelled the secular canons from St. Werburgh's church, and established in their place an abbot and convent of Benedictine monks, from Bec, in Normandy. Anselm, who at that time was Abbot of Bec, recommended his own chaplain, Richard, to Earl Hugh as a fit person to be superior of the monastery; and he was accordingly appointed the first abbot. After richly endowing this monastery, Earl Hugh died A. D. 1101, having three days before become a monk of his convent. Richard, the first abbot, died A. D. 1117; and during the abbacy of his successors, William, Ralph, Robert Fitz Nigel, Robert, Robert de Hastinges, and Geoffrey, the monastery received many endowments; but, notwithstanding, when Geoffrey became abbot, A, D. 1194, the greater part of the church was in ruins, and the building had proceeded no further than the choir. The inroads of the Welsh had deprived the monks of a valuable rectory and two manors; and the inundations of the sea had been equally fatal to their possessions in other places.

During the abbacy of Hugh Grylle, who succeeded Geoffrey, and was elected abbot, A. D, 1208, the repairs in the church were completed, and the affairs of the monks appear to have been in a more prosperous state generally, since, at that time, permission

was granted to the abbot and convent to extend their buildings in the direction of the north-gate.

Simon de Whitchurch, who had previously been a monk of this monastery, was elected the thirteenth abbot, A. D. 1265, and appears to have been one of the most active heads that presided over this house. Simon de Montfort was at that period usurping the earldom of Chester; and when he was informed that Lucas de Taney, justiciary of Chester, refused to admit Whitchurch to the abbacy of Chester, and had kept the authority in his own hands for three weeks, receiving the revenues of the monastery, and wasting them with scandalous profligacy, he immediately caused Whitchurch to be admitted, and directed De Taney to make ample compensation to the abbey for the injustice of which he had been guilty. Shortly afterwards the partizans of Prince Edward laid siege to Chester Castle, and a reverse of fortune speedily taking place, the election of the abbot was declared void by the lawful earl, as having never been ratified by himself. The abbot, however, made his peace with Prince Edward at Beeston, and he was confirmed in his appointment. During his abbacy, the monastery, or a considerable portion of it, was rebuilt, as appears by precepts directed to Reginald de Grey, (12 Edward the First,) to allow venison from the forests of Delamere and Wirral, for the support of the

monks, then occupied "on the great work of the building of the church." This abbot also appropriated a large share of the revenues of the abbey to the several uses of the infirmary, the kitchen, the refectory, and the distribution of alms. In the early part of his time the convent received a license to hold a fair in their manor of Brombury.

A. D. 1281. Abbot Whitchurch having, by his own liberality furnished King Edward the First in his expedition to Wales, with men and carriages, the king granted him a patent of indemnity to prevent this instance of his liberality from being drawn into a precedent for the infringement of his charter and privileges for the future. Abbot Whitchurch died, A. D. 1289, and the king retained the abbey in his hands two years. Nothing of importance occurring during the presidency of his immediate successors, we, therefore, pass on to Simon de Ripley, the twenty-third abbot. He rebuilt the nave, tower, and south transept of the monastery; and, Mr. Ormerod thinks, commenced the great plan of alterations and improvements, which were interrupted by the reformation. He died, A. D. 1492, and was succeeded by John Birchenshaw, who, like his predecessor, turned his attention to restoring the magnificence of the buildings of the monastery. The beautiful western entrance is his work; and he, doubt-

less, intended to have added two western towers to this great entrance, of one of which he laid the foundations A. D. 1508. In the year 1511, in the mayoralty of Thomas Smith, violent dissensions arose between the city and this abbot. Thomas Hyphile and Thomas Marshall were successively appointed, and acted as abbots in his stead; after a contest, however, which lasted many years, John Birchenshaw was restored about A. D. 1530, and is supposed to have enjoyed his abbacy to the time of his death, which happened seven years after. John Clarke was elected abbot A. D. 1537; and little more is known of him than that he readily complied with the wishes of the king in surrendering the monastery at the time of the dissolution: on which account he was suffered to retain the government of the dissolved abbey, under the character of dean of the new cathedral.

At the dissolution, the yearly revenue of this monastery amounted, according to Dugdale, to £1003. 5s. 11d. The monastic lands extended over various parts of Cheshire, and other countries; and formed almost an unbroken ring round the city of Chester. Many considerable families held lands by the tenure of various offices in the abbey. The Earl of Derby was seneschal at the time of the dissolution.

By a charter of one of the earls, named Randle,

the abbots were directed, at an early period, to have their manor-houses fitted up in a state to receive the abbot's retinue, and to be the seats of the courts; and by licence from the Bishop of Lichfield, oratories were also established in these manor-houses. Irby, Bromborough, Sutton, and Salghton appear to have been the principal ones at an early period. The three first were the original seats of the courts held for the Wirral manors, and Salghton is noticed in a licence for fortifying, by King Edward the First. During Chester fair, which was originally a right of the abbey, and not of the city, the abbot had the exclusive criminal jurisdiction in all cases, excepting trials for murder; and when capital conviction followed, contrary to the ordinary custom of the city, the criminal was executed on the earl's gallows, by the officers of the abbot.

The abbey of St. Werburgh was surrendered, with all its lands, January 20th, 1540, under the convent seal. Two years after which the king, by his letters patent, founded within the site of the dissolved monastery, an episcopal see, and cathedral church, for a bishop, dean, and six prebendaries. The church was henceforth styled the Church of Christ, and the blessed Virgin Mary: the king declaring by the same, that Chester should henceforth for ever be a city, and the county and city of Chester should be

exempt from the jurisdiction of the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry. By these letters patent the king also translated to, and confirmed as bishop of the said see, John Byrde, Bishop of Bangor; and annexed to the said bishopric the archdeaconries of Richmond and Chester, then lately resigned to the king by William Knyght; enumerating among the appurtenances of the archdeaconry of Richmond, the rectory and church of Bolton-in-Lonsdale, in Lancashire; the rectories and churches of Clapham, Easingwold, and Thornton Stuart, in the county of York; and the chapel, or chantry, of Rastall, with all the tithes, &c., belonging to the said churches: and among the appurtenances of the archdeaconry of Chester, the prebend of Bolton-le-Moors, in the cathedral church of Lichfield. A portion of the abbey-buildings was also granted as a palace for the Bishop of Chester. The subsequent provisions of the letters patent grant to the Bishops of Chester the same ecclesiastical authority which other bishops enjoy in their respective sees, and place the entire see within the province of Canterbury. The letters patent also grant to the chapter the site and precinct of the dissolved abbey, excepting that part which had been granted to the bishop.*

The convent buildings occupied nearly one-fourth

* Monasticon, vol. ii. p. 370.

of the city, and were bounded by the city walls on the north and east, and (with perhaps some slight exceptions) by the Northgate and Eastgate streets on the remaining sides. The principal entrance was from the Northgate street, under the Greater Abbey gate, still remaining, which led into a space nearly co-extensive with the present abbey square, surrounded on three sides with offices of the convent, and on the fourth by the abbot's lodging, standing on the site of the present episcopal palace. In the north-east angle of this square was St. Thomas' chapel, now the dean's house; and in the north-west angle there was another entrance from the city by the Little Abbey gate. East of the refectory was another quadrangle, nearly co-extensive with Little Abbey court, and was probably occupied by the domestics; and south-west of the great church was the Chapel of St. Nicholas, perfectly detached from the general mass of buildings. Of this part of the monastery only fragments now remain, consisting of walls and arches, which have been worked into the buildings which occupy the site. The Great Abbey gate consists of a lofty arch, with a postern by the side. The interior of the gateway is vaulted with stone, with ribs and carved key-stones at the intersections; and the rooms over, which are now used as the registry, were formerly approached by a spiral

staircase. On the south side was the porter's lodge; and on the other St. Thomas' court, to which the tenants of several abbey manors still render suit and service. Before this gate were anciently ranged the booths for the merchants frequenting the abbot's fair, covered with reeds, which the monks were empowered, by charter, to gather from Stanlow marsh; and here, also, the performers in the Chester mysteries commenced the exhibition of their pageants.*

* The series of mysteries performed at Chester, and usually attributed to Randle, or Ralph Higden, a monk of St. Werburgh's abbey, although not the most numerous, has been considered as the most ancient, as well as most complete collection of the kind now in existence. The date usually assigned to their composition is the year 1327. They have, however, been ascribed to an earlier time, and a different author. It is thought by no means improbable that in the composition of these plays two, or even a greater number of, monks might have been concerned. Two or three MSS. of these plays are still extant, each containing twenty-four mysteries, comprehending a representation of the most striking incidents in the Old and New Testament, from the creation of the world to the last judgment.

CHAPTER XVI.

MONKS OF THE MIDDLE AGES. INGULF. CISTERCIANS. CLUNIACS. GRANDMONTINES. CARTHUSIANS.

> "Here man more freely lives, less oft doth fall,
> More promptly rises, walks with stricter heed,
> More safely rests, dies happier, is freed
> Earlier from cleansing fires, and gains withal
> A brighter crown."
>
> ST. BERNARD.

THE conquest of England, by William, Duke of Normandy, A. D. 1066, was an event in which the monastics of this kingdom were deeply interested. They were, more or less, connected with the disturbances which rendered the conqueror uneasy amid his new possessions, and tyrants require but very slight grounds for the indulgence of their cupidity; and such was especially the case at the period to which we are now referring. Whenever a monastery in-

curred the conqueror's displeasure, and there were but few, indeed, which escaped, he forcibly possessed himself of their lands, searched into all their charters, and confiscated their treasures.

In the year following the conquest, a council, or synod, was held at Winchester, in which the king procured Stigand, Archbishop of Canterbury, to be degraded and condemned to perpetual imprisonment, and several other bishops and abbots to be deposed. Occasionally the king exercised his tyranny over the defenceless monasteries, by totally disregarding the charters which preceding monarchs had granted and confirmed, and by which the choice of abbot was vested in the monastery over which a fresh abbot was required to preside; and not only depriving them of their free choice, but further, forcing upon their acceptance a creature of his own. Often the abbots then appointed, having no interest in the welfare of their society, further than that which related to their own revenues, reduced their monasteries to the verge of ruin, from which, in some cases, they scarcely ever recovered. Sometimes, however, the appointment of such men was an advantage, because the interest which they possessed at court enabled them, when they were so disposed, to recover the lands of which their monastery had been forcibly deprived.

One of the most renowned abbots, after the conquest, was Ingulf, to whom allusion has already been made in connection with the monastery of Croyland, of which he was appointed head by the conqueror. Ingulf was a native of England, and, it is said, his father was one of Edward the Confessor's courtiers. He was educated at a school in Westminster, from whence he proceeded to the University of Oxford, where he applied himself, with great diligence, to the study of Aristotle.

When William, Duke of Normandy, came into England, A. D. 1051, to pay a visit to King Edward the Confessor, Ingulf was introduced to him; and on his return, he accompanied him into Normandy, and became his principal secretary.

Fearing, however, lest the favour with which he was regarded by so distinguished a prince should expose him to envy, he withdrew from the court of Normandy, and made a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. On his return he determined to assume the monastic habit, and was soon after made prior of the Abbey of Fontenels, in Normandy. From hence he was invited by the conqueror to preside over the monastery of Croyland; and the interest which he possessed with the king, as well as with Lanfranc, the Archbishop of Canterbury, enabled him to render very important services to his monastery.

Ingulf appears to have possessed a peculiar talent for recording events of local and historical interest; and his chronicle is of no small value to the English historian, in investigating the events of an important period in our national history.

After being exposed to all the horrors which usually accompany a conquest, the monasteries at length recovered from their depression: and the conquest, so far from proving their total ruin, may be regarded as a grand epoch in their history, from which they might date far greater splendour than they had hitherto enjoyed. This more particularly refers to the Cistercian monks, who were, before this event, comparatively speaking, but little known in this kingdom. This order was a reformed branch of Benedictines, and derived its name from Citeaux, a village situated in the diocese of Chalons, where Robert, Abbot of Molesme in Burgundy, founded a monastery towards the end of the eleventh century. Robert had in vain endeavoured to revive the decaying discipline of his convent, by obliging his monks to observe, with greater exactness, the Rule of St. Benedict; and not succeeding in his attempt, he retired from Molesme, with about twenty monks, who had not been infected with the prevailing dissoluteness of his monastery, and proceeded to Citeaux, which, at that time, was overspread with brambles

and thorns. He then laid the foundation of the order of the Cistercians; but being again unsuccessful, he quitted his new institution, and was succeeded by Stephen Harding, an Englishman, who presided over the abbey until the arrival of St. Bernard, A. D. 1113. St. Bernard visited the monastery of Citeaux with about thirty companions, for the express purpose of enrolling themselves as monks of the Cistercian order, and from that time the order began to flourish; and, before the conclusion of the twelfth century, it was propagated throughout the greatest part of Europe.

The first monastery of this order built in England was that of Waverley, in Surrey, which was founded A. D. 1129, by William Gifford, Bishop of Winchester. Tintern Abbey was founded three years later; and A. D. 1132, Walter L'Espec, a baron in the north, founded Rieval Abbey; and a few years later, Roger de Mowbray founded Byland Abbey.

The celebrity which this order attained both in England, and on the continent of Europe, arose from the peculiar sanctity which was believed to prevail amongst them. A writer,* who flourished in the thirteenth century, in speaking of this order, says, "All the Church of Jesus Christ is full of the high reputation and opinion of their sanctity, as it

* Cardinal de Vitry.

were with the odour of some divine balsam, and there is no country or province wherein this vine, loaded with blessings, has not spread its branches."

In describing their observances, the same writer says, "They neither wear skins nor shirts, nor ever eat flesh, unless in grievous sickness; and they neither eat fish, nor eggs, nor milk, nor cheese, but only upon extraordinary occasions, and when given to them in charity. Their lay brothers, who live in the country round about the abbey, drink no wine. All the brothers, both lay and ecclesiastic, lie only upon straw beds, in their tunics and cowls; they rise at midnight, and spend the rest of the night, till break of day, in singing God's praises; and having sung prime and mass, and confessed their faults to the chapter, they spend the rest of the day in labour, reading, or prayer, without ever giving way to sloth or idleness; and in all those exercises they maintain strict and continual silence, excepting during the hour which is allowed them for spiritual conference. Their fasts are continual, from the Feast of the Exaltation of the Holy Cross, till Easter; and they exercise hospitality towards the poor with extraordinary charity."*

Perhaps no ecclesiastic ever attained greater influence than St. Bernard. His word was a law, and

* See History of Monasteries by Steevens, vol. ii. p. 26.

his counsels were regarded by kings and princes as orders to which the most respectful obedience was due. Under his powerful patronage it is not surprising that the Cistercians became enriched with liberal and splendid donations, and at length acquired the form and privileges of a spiritual republic, exercising a kind of religious dominion over the other orders. From their connexion with St. Bernard, and from the circumstance of his being considered as the second founder, the Cistercians in France and Germany were often distinguished by the title of Bernardine monks.

The Cistercians were called *white* monks, from their dress, which was a white frock, or cassock, over which they wore a black cloak, when they went beyond the walls of the monastery. Their abbeys, which have all been ruined, are still left in their ruins, in the lonely spots where they were first fixed by the disciples of St. Bernard: out of the way of the common haunts of men, in lonely mountain valleys, where they taught the barren wilderness to smile. St. Bernard himself was guided by his peculiar piety to make choice of such places. "Believe me," says he, to Henry Murdock, "you will find more lessons in the woods than in books. Trees and stones will teach you what you cannot learn from masters. Have you forgotten how it is written, 'He made him to

suck honey out of the rock, and oil out of the flinty rock?'—Deut. xxxii. 13. You have need not so much of reading as of prayer; and thus may God open your hearts to understand His law and His commandments."*

Cluniacs.

Another branch of the Benedictine tree, and one unknown in England until after the conquest, was the order of Cluniacs, which derived its name from Clugni, in the province of Burgundy; where Odo, a man of great learning and piety, being created abbot in the tenth century, endeavoured to reform the Benedictine rule; and, in accomplishing his purpose, added to the ancient discipline some new ceremonies: and thus, almost inadvertently, became the founder of a fresh order. It is almost needless to remark that the Cluniacs were Benedictines, according to *the spirit* of the rule. They wore the same dress, which was a black frock or cassock, with a white tunic or woollen shirt underneath, and a black hood or scapulary to put over the head. This order was never popular in England, although an attempt was made to introduce it into Benedictine abbeys. The

* Early English Church, p. 323.

first house established by this order in England was at Lewes, in Sussex, where they were established under the protection of Earl Warenne, son-in-law to the conqueror. Among their peculiarities, there were two solemn masses to be attended every day; and so strict was the silence observed among them, that to violate it before prime, was deemed a very serious offence; and this gave rise to the use of signs among them, instead of words. They spent much of their time in meditation; and great strictness was observed among them, both with regard to the admission of strangers, and permission for any of the monks to leave the monastery. If a monk were about to mount his horse, to go out, and the bell happened to ring for divine service, he was obliged to postpone his journey, and attend church.

In their fasts they obeyed, for the most part, the rule of Benedict. From the thirteenth of September, until Lent, they ate only once a day, except during the octaves of Christmas and Epiphany, when they were allowed to have an extra meal. On those feasts, after reading and nones, they proceeded to the refectory to drink; but on other days, this indulgence was not permitted until after vespers. Broken food was given by the almoner to pedestrian pilgrims. Eighteen poor persons were fed every day from their table, and during Lent this number was very

greatly increased. The piety and zeal of these monks speedily acquired a high reputation for their order upon the continent, although they were unable to attain a considerable footing in England. The Abbot of Clugni was regarded as the spiritual chief of many monasteries which did not altogether conform to the new rule. The intercourse between the English monasteries, which regarded the Abbot of Clugni as their head, was put an end to by King Henry the Fifth, who being engaged in war with the French king, completely cut off the English Cluniacs from their head; and as they were prohibited from having any correspondence with foreign monasteries of their order, many of them united themselves with other orders which were established in England. Those who maintained their connexion with Clugni were compelled to resign their monasteries into the king's hands. This caused an embassy, or deputation, to be sent to Henry from Clugni, and the proceedings are thus described in a MS. of John Wheathamstead, Abbot of St. Alban's. The occurrence took place A.D. 1457. In the same year, viz., in that month when ploughing begins, and men use to go into the fields on account of the early sowing, there came into England three monks of the monastery of Clugni, men of probity and worth; men grave of behaviour, and very powerful in sense and

judgment, who landing at Dover, proceeded directly till they came to the city of London. Being come thither, and understanding that the king was at St. Alban's, they immediately set out, and mounting on horseback again, came to the town of the protomartyr. Going into the church, and meeting with several of the king's servants, they desired that they might have leave to come into the king's presence, to lay before him the cause of their coming, and to forward their business. The king being informed of their coming and request, ordered the Bishop of Durham, then keeper of the privy seal, the Lord Grey de Ruthyn, and his secretary, a solid, sober, and judicious man, to take them aside, and to hear what they should say concerning the cause of their coming. These three great men going into the church, took them aside to a private place, that is the vestry, and then enquired of them what was the cause of their coming, and what they had to say to the king.

Then the elder brother of them, a man in years, and a doctor of divinity, opened his mouth, and said, 'Worthy fathers and lords, we are come into this kingdom, being sent by our father, the Abbot of Clugni, upon three accounts. First, to show his royal excellency how his noble progenitors were most great and bountiful benefactors to our Church, above

all kings in the universe: as among them King Henry II. is said to have been so generous and extraordinary an enricher and endower of the same, that he is now called by us our principal founder: and is principally and most singularly recommended by us in all and every our suffrages. Secondly, to beg the possession and confirmation of all those estates, which his said progenitors had conferred upon our place, and have been now no small time detained and torn away from us. Thirdly, to obtain full and free licence to enter all places depending on our monastery, and which were put under our rule and government by the noble progenitors of the present king. For these three reasons we came into this kingdom, and we earnestly desire, if it shall please his royal condescension, that we may come into his presence to lay the same before him' Their suit, however, did not prevail, and in a letter which they afterwards addressed to the Abbot of St. Alban's, they said they were sent back very disconsolate, being deprived of their manors, and having their pensions alienated; and, what they considered still worse, being denied the obedience of their monasteries.*

* See History of Monasteries, by Steevens, vol. ii. p. 12.

Grandmontines.*

This order, like the preceding ones, was a branch of the Benedictines, and received its name from Grammont, in the province of Limoges, near which the first monastery belonging to it was founded. The founder was Stephen, a nobleman of Auvergne, who, at the close of the eleventh century, obtained permission from Gregory VII. to institute a new species of monastic discipline. His first design was to subject his convent to the rule of St. Benedict; but he changed his intention, and although this rule was in part adopted by him, yet he composed a body of laws which was to be their rule of life. In these laws there were many injunctions which showed the excessive austerity of their author. Poverty and obedience were the two great points which he inculcated with the warmest zeal; and all his regulations were designed to promote and secure them. For this purpose it was solemnly enacted that the monks should possess no lands beyond the limits of their convent: that the use of flesh should not be permitted: and that this regulation should not

* There were scarcely any houses of this order in England, except one or two alien priories.

be relaxed, even in the case of the sick and infirm. That none should be allowed to keep cattle, lest they should be exposed to the temptation of violating their frugal mode of living. Silence, which was a favourite part of monastic discipline, was strictly enforced by Stephen; and so much did he insist upon the importance and necessity of solitude, that none, except a few persons of the highest eminence, were permitted to pass the threshold of his monastery. He prohibited all intercourse with the female sex, and, in a word, excluded his order from all the comforts and enjoyments of life. Such were the chief points in this new institution, which was regarded with most profound veneration, so long as its laws and discipline were observed. But when the strictness of the rule was relaxed, through the indulgence of the heads of the order, and the Roman pontiff, the fame of the order was diminished, and it merely ranked as a simple offset of the Benedictines.

Carthusians.

The last branch of the Benedictines, which we shall notice, is the order of the Carthusians, so called from Chartreux, a wild and desert spot of ground

near Grenoble, in Dauphine, surrounded with barren mountains and craggy rocks. The founder of this monastic society, which surpassed all the rest in austerity of manners, and severity of discipline, was Bruno, a native of Cologne, and canon of Rheims, in France. Being irritated by the corruptions which prevailed in his cathedral, which he had neither the power to reform, nor the patience to bear, he retired from the church with six of his companions; and having first obtained the permission of the Bishop of Grenoble, he fixed his residence in the miserable desert already mentioned. He at first adopted the rule of St. Benedict, to which he added a number of severe and rigorous precepts. His successors, however, went still further, and imposed laws and regulations on the society much more intolerable than those prescribed by the founder, and which inculcated the highest degree of austerity that the most gloomy imagination could invent. Their laws limited the quantity of land, and the number of flocks and herds, which they should possess. This regulation was designed as a barrier against the luxury and wealth which had been productive of much corruption in the ancient Benedictine institutions, and which this order professed to reform.

Notwithstanding the severity of their regulations, there was a closer adherence to the prescribed disci-

pline, in this order, than in any other; and less degeneracy either of mind or morals. The progress which this order made throughout Europe was less rapid, and its influence less extensive, than was the case with those, whose laws were less rigorous, and whose manners were less austere. It was long before the tender sex could be prevailed upon to submit to the severe rules of this melancholy institution: and even when their natural repugnance was overcome, the Carthusian order could never boast of having any considerable amount of females subject to its jurisdiction. It was too forbidding to influence a sex, which, although susceptible of the highest degree of enthusiasm, is of a frame too delicate to support the severities which its discipline required. Even among men the Carthusian order was not popular in England, as they had only nine houses: the first being founded at Witham, in Somersetshire, A.D. 1181, and their most celebrated establishment being the Charter House in London, now used as the school and hospital of Thomas Sutton.

These were the only orders of monks connected with the Benedictine rule, which were established in England.

In the various regulations by which these orders were distinguished from each other, we have an evi-

dent type of those multifarious sects, into which ultra-protestantism has divided Christendom. During the prevalence of the monastic system, sufficient latitude was given for the exercise of the most vagrant fancy, without disturbing the peace of the Church, or tearing asunder the seamless garb of Christian charity. The license thus afforded was evidently taken advantage of to a very considerable extent, and this circumstance serves to shew that the divisions and subdivisions which now prevail, were not so much the result of an abuse of private judgment, first called into action by the voice of our reformers, as an innate propensity in the human mind to assert its entire independence, but which propensity has unfortunately at the present time, no outlet for harmless evaporation.

Cistercian.

W

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SAME SUBJECT CONTINUED. AUGUSTINES. PRÆMONSTRATENSIANS. GILBERTINES. BONHOMMES. NUNS OF FONTEVRAULD. BRIGETTINE NUNS.

"She sees new shoots around her spring,
And branches not her own."

PARISIAN BREVIARY. WILLIAMS.

The Augustines.

THE Augustines are perfectly distinct from the orders noticed in the preceding chapter, as their rule is founded upon principles entirely independent of those by which St. Benedict was influenced in framing his rule. They took their name from St. Augustine, the celebrated Bishop of Hippo, in Africa, although their order was not founded until the time of Pope Alexander II., A.D. 1061: and first came into Eng-

land in the reign of Henry the First. This order had, in all, about one hundred and seventy houses in this kingdom, dispersed throughout it; the largest of which were at Plympton, Devon; at Carlisle, Cumberland; at Chick, or St. Ositho, Essex; at Leicester; at Walsingham, Norfolk, where they had a celebrated image and chapel of the Virgin Mary, who was usually styled, in reference to her shrine, "Our Lady of Walsingham;" and to whom great numbers formerly made pilgrimages and presented costly offerings; at Haghmond, near Shrewsbury; at Cirencester, Gloucestershire; at Newstead, Notts; at Bristol, which is now the cathedral church; at Kenilworth, Warwickshire; and at Gisborough, at Bridlington, where the parish church is formed out of the nave of the old monastic pile; and at Bolton, Yorkshire. They were not all alike in dress; but were commonly called Black Canons; generally wearing a long black cassock, with a white rochet over it, and over all a black cloak or hood. The monks always shaved their chins; but the canons wore their beards, and caps or bonnets on their heads, instead of hoods. By the first rule of this order, all property was to be relinquished by the candidates for admission, and nothing was to be taken away by a canon leaving the order. Everything was to be submitted for the superior's approbation, and the rules of the order

were to be strictly observed by every member of the monastery. Every one guilty of contumacy was to be punished by an officer, who was appointed for that purpose; and before whom all disagreements were to be laid. The second rule appointed what psalms should be sung at the services, and nightly readings after vespers. Labour was prescribed from morning till sext, or noon-day; and from sext till three o'clock, or nones, reading; and after refection, or dinner, work was again prescribed until vespers. Two persons were always to be sent together on the convent business; and no one was allowed to eat or drink out of the house. Those who were entrusted to sell anything, were required to act strictly according to rule. No idle talking or gossiping was allowed, but all were to preserve their several avocations in silence.

Rule 3. By this rule, the strictest union was enjoined. Food and raiment were to be distributed by the superior, and everything was to be in common. All feelings of pride or envy were to be suppressed, and brotherly love was enjoined. Attention was to be paid to divine service, and the church was only to be used for public worship, or private prayer. Nothing was allowed to be sung, except what was ordered, and fasting and abstinence were to be strictly observed. Nothing was to be offensive either in

their habits or gestures: and they were forbidden to fix their eyes upon women, and were moreover, enjoined to mutually preserve each other's modesty, when in the presence of females. If any transgressed these regulations, they were to be punished by the superior.

The sick were to have an infirmarer; and the officers of the house were to serve the brethren cheerfully. No law-suits or quarrels of any kind were permitted, and, if in any case, they were unavoidable, they were to be terminated as quickly as possible. Satisfaction was to be made for offences, and harsh expressions were to be avoided, or an apology made, if uttered. Obedience was, on all occasions, to be shewn towards the superior; who, on his part, was required to govern in charity; and who, although he was to be strict in discipline, yet was enjoined to aim rather to be loved than feared.

Under this rule, the following orders were comprehended, viz., Præmonstratensians, Trinitarians, and Dominicans.

Præmonstratensians.

Their name is derived from Premonstre, a town of Picardy, in France, where this order was founded A.D. 1121, by Norbert, a German nobleman, who took holy orders, and was afterwards consecrated

Archbishop of Magdebourg; and who failing to reform the existing orders, determined upon founding a new one, taking the rule of St. Augustine as his fundamental regulation. They were called white in consequence of their cassock, and the rest of their dress, being white instead of black. They first came into England A.D. 1146; and their first monastery, called New House, was built in Lincolnshire, by Peter de Saulia, and was dedicated to St. Martial. The entire number of houses established by this order in England was only thirty-five; and that founded at Welbeck, Notts, now the seat of the Duke of Portland, was the chief. Although there were so few monasteries, of this order, in England, yet in the space of thirty years after the foundation of the order, they are said to have possessed one hundred abbeys in France and Germany. In process of time the order increased so wonderfully, that it had monasteries in every part of Christendom, amounting to one thousand abbeys, a vast number of priories, and five hundred nunneries. This wonderful extension of the order was the consequence of the high reputation which the canons belonging to it had acquired for the gravity of their manners, and their assiduous application to the liberal arts and sciences. Their rules were very austere, and the great object of their

order was to maintain a pure and contemplative life.

Amongst other regulations, they required novices to be of a proper age, and to be able to read well, to understand grammar, and know Latin, before they made their profession: which was not to be permitted before they were eighteen. The abbots of the order were to meet once-a-year at Premonstre, to consult about the affairs of the order; and the penalty for non-attendance could only be remitted by the pope. The abbots were to have the power of excommunicating and absolving their monks. If any differences arose, they were to be composed among themselves, and no appeal was permitted to be made to secular courts. They were exempt from episcopal control, and did not use any episcopal insignia.

Gilbertines.

This order formed a connecting link between the Benedictine and Augustine rules. It was founded by a Lincolnshire priest, called Gilbert of Sempringham, A.D. 1148, and was designed both for men and women; the men living according to the rule of St. Augustine, and the women being like Cistercian nuns. This order was very acceptable to poor females, in an age when domestic troubles exposed them to innumerable hardships; and it is said that,

in the course of a few years, fifteen hundred of them availed themselves of this new asylum.*

The peculiarity of Gilbert's plan was, that he built his convents for men and women adjoining each other: with separate apartments, however, for each. There were in all twenty-five houses of Gilbertines in England, and of these the greater part were in Lincolnshire and Yorkshire: the principal establishments being at Sempringham and Watton. This latter house did not bear a very high character when it was first founded; and the order itself was never held in much esteem, beyond the retreat which it afforded to the weaker sex.

Bonhommes.

This was an order of but little repute in England, since they had only two houses, one in Buckinghamshire, and another in Wiltshire. They followed the Augustine rule; but with such variations as rendered them perfectly distinct from the Augustine monks or canons.

Nuns of Fontevrauld.

This was an order of which but little is known. They had only three houses in England, which were

* Monasticon, vol. ii., p. 680.

all founded during the reign of Henry the Second, and followed the Benedictine rule. This order derived its name from Font Ebrold, or Fontevrauld, in France. It was under the government of an abbess, and silence was observed, except in chapter.

Brigettine Nuns.

This order, which derives its name from St. Bridget, had only one house in England, which is now the seat of the Duke of Northumberland, and is known as Sion House. It was founded by King Henry V., A. D. 1414, and was well endowed. The society consisted of eighty-five persons, which answered to our Lord's thirteen apostles (including St. Paul), and the seventy-two disciples; viz., sixty nuns, of which one was to be the lady abbess; thirteen priests, four deacons, and eight lay-brethren.* When any one wished to be admitted into this society, they were, on their first application, sent back for three months. If they returned at the expiration of that time, they were asked whether they still continued to desire admission.

On answering in the affirmative, they were again sent back for a longer period of probation; after which, the rule, with all its asperities, &c. was pro-

* Tanner's Notitia Monastica, Midd. Syon.

posed to them; and after a year of probation, they were admitted in the following manner: the candidate for admission having presented herself to the bishop at the gate of the church, he put several questions to her, such as whether she was free from the ties of matrimony, or from those of the Church; whether she was free from excommunication, &c., and whether she desired entrance then in the name of Jesus Christ, and the Virgin Mary? When he was satisfied on these points, the bishop introduced her into the church, when the two candles were lighted, which were carried before the standard that preceded the nun, and burned during the performance of mass. The bishop having taken the ring, consecrated it, and then put it on the nun's finger, and consecrated her; after which mass was performed. The bishop went to the altar, and began the mass, while the nun stood at the altar, she having gone there at the commencement of the offertory; she afterwards retired to her place, from which she was called by a priest, and then going bare-footed to the altar, divested herself of her outward garment, preparatory to putting on her consecrated ones. The tunic, hood, veil, &c., in which the bishop fixed a pin, were then severally put on, and consecrated, after which she again returned to her place. When this part of

the ceremony was over, the bishop commenced mass, and when he came to that part at which the priest, in the wedding rite, blessed the husband and wife, the novice was again called up to the altar, when the bishop placed a crown upon her head, fixed a pin in it, offered up a prayer, and dismissed her to her place, where she remained until the mass was over.

Then she came to the altar, prostrated herself upon her face before it, and a litany and absolution followed: after which she received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper; and immediately afterwards four sisters of the house brought in her coffin, which, during mass, remained in the gate through which the nun was introduced, with earth sprinkled upon it. Then the bishop went to the gate, and commended her to the abbess, who made a suitable reply. The nun was then led to the chapter, and during the first eight days, was exempted from discipline, and stood at the bottom of the choir. At the expiration of this time, she began the observance of the order, and sat the last both in the choir and at table.*

This was the solemn form of admission to the Brigettine Convent, at Sion House, and very similar ceremonies were observed at the admission of nuns into other religious houses: the ceremonies varying

* Brit. Monachism. p. 123.

according to the peculiar rules under which they were about to profess.

Although for base and mercenary purposes the young female might occasionally be compelled unwillingly to devote herself to the retirement of the cloister, yet these possible cases were far from counter-balancing the advantages which these institutions afforded, as an asylum from the brutal violence to which the weaker sex was exposed during the middle ages. Even at the present time, similar institutions would be found a welcome retreat to those on whom the world has frowned, and who might hence be enabled, by penitence and prayer, to devote themselves to Him "Who turneth Himself to the prayer of the poor destitute, and despiseth not their desire."*

* Psalm cii., v. 17, Prayer-Book version.

Augustine Monk.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Military Orders.

TRINITARIANS. KNIGHTS OF ST. JOHN OF JERUSALEM.
KNIGHTS TEMPLARS. TEUTONIC KNIGHTS.

> Then blame not those who by the mightiest lever,
> Known to the moral world, Imagination,
> Upheave, so seems it, from her natural station,
> All Christendom: they sweep along (was never
> So huge a host!)—to tear from the Unbeliever
> The precious tomb, their haven of salvation.
>
> WORDSWORTH.

THE religious ardour which was awakened in Europe towards the close of the eleventh century, by the preaching of Peter the Hermit, and which led the flower of European chivalry to Palestine, in order to secure the Holy Sepulchre from the hands of the Moslems, was the means of introducing a dis-

tinct order of monastics, who are known by the names of Trinitarians, Knights of St. John of Jerusalem, Knights Templers, and Teutonic Knights, or Knights of St. Mary of Jerusalem,—according to the peculiar rules which they respectively adopted.

Trinitarians.

The founders of the order of Trinitarians were John de Matha and Felix de Valois, two men of devoted piety, who led an austere and solitary life at Cerfroy, in the diocese of Meaux, in France.

The great numbers of Christians, who were made prisoners by the Mahommedans in Palestine, gave rise to the institution of this order towards the latter part of the twelfth century; but it received its greatest degree of stability under the pontificates of Honorius III. and Clement IV. The monks of this society are called "Trinitarians," or "Brethren of the Holy Trinity," because all their churches are solemnly dedicated to that profound mystery: they are also styled "Mathurins," from having a monastery at Paris erected in a place where there is a chapel consecrated to St. Mathurin; and "Brethren of the Redemption of Captives," because the grand design of their institution was to find out means for restoring liberty to the Christian captives in the

Holy Land, in which charitable work they were obliged to employ the third part of their revenue. Their manner of life was at first extremely austere, but its austerity was from time to time considerably mitigated by the indulgence and lenity of the Roman pontiffs.

Knights of St. John.

The reverence with which the Holy Sepulchre had from very early times been regarded, drew crowds of pilgrims to visit it, and provision was made for their accommodation by means of two hospitals, the chapels of which were put under the protection of St. John the Almoner,* and of St. Mary Magdalen. Some Benedictine monks administered the consolations of religion; and the duties of benevolence, and the offices of charity, were performed by such of those pious Europeans who had resolved to end their days in Palestine. The weary palmers found repose, the sick were healed, and the poor were relieved in these houses of charity. Humanity was paramount over the distinctions of religious belief, and even no unfortunate Moslem ever supplicated at the gate in vain.

* St. John the Almoner was Patriarch of Alexandria in the seventh century: and when Jerusalem fell into the hands of the Saracens, he sent money and provisions to the afflicted Christians, and supplied such as fled into Egypt. *See Butler's Lives, vol.* 1, *p.* 271.

The alms of the people of Southern Italy contributed to support the establishment, and the merchants of Amalfi might be regarded as its trustees.

This charitable institution, however, suffered from the storms which convulsed Palestine during the eleventh century, and its oppressed and persecuted members were often reduced to the greatest possible distress. New vigour, however, was given to their virtues when the Crusaders were triumphant; the hospital received the wounded soldiers; and so self-denying were these ministers of charity, that the bread which they ate was made from the coarsest flour, mixed with bran; while that which was given to the sick was formed from the purest meal. The benevolence of the residents in the hospital was beheld with affectionate respect by the crusaders. Godfrey testified his gratitude by enriching the hospital with an estate in Brabant, and many of his companions in arms devoted themselves to the perpetual service of the way-worn pilgrims.

The association gradually acquired importance, and feeling the weight of the charge, Gerard, their principal, proposed to his brethren that they should renounce the world, and assume a religious habit. The lay members separated themselves from the Church of St. John the Almoner, and became a congregation under the tutelage of St. John the Baptist.

The patriarch of Jerusalem accepted their vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience, and invested them with a plain black robe, having a white linen cross on the left breast. This dress, however, was afterwards altered. Between the year 1278 and 1289, the grand master and council of this society enacted that, while the brethren of the hospital were engaged in military duties, they should wear over their clothes a red military cassock, with a white cross. But the long black robe could never be dispensed with in the house. Their statutes were very minute in the regulation of their dress; and one of them says, "It becomes a religious man to be polite in body as well as in mind, and, therefore, we enjoin our brothers to dress themselves decently and handsomely, forbidding them expressly for the future to wear any dress that is not fit for their condition, particularly short clothes, unless they are on a journey, or on shipboard, or on guard."

By a bull of Pope Paschal II., A.D. 1113, the hospital was put under the protection of the Roman see, and had the valuable privilege conferred upon it of electing its own superintendent, and being exempt from the payment of tithes. Through the liberality of many of the princes of Christendom, and the pious donations of those who frequented the holy places, the revenues of the hospital far exceeded the wants

of those whom they were designed to cherish and relieve. In consequence of this, Raymond du Puy, who was the head of this establishment, offered to the King of Jerusalem* to make war upon the Mahometans at his own expense, seconded by his brethren, who served under him in the hospital. Baldwin II., to whom this proposal was made, readily accepted it, and the enterprize was approved and confirmed by the authority of Rome. Thus was a devout fraternity, who had lived remote from the noise and tumult of arms, occupied in the performance of works of charity and mercy, transformed into a band of hardy and valiant warriors. The whole order was, upon this occasion, divided into three classes; the first contained the *knights*, or soldiers of illustrious birth, who were to unsheath their swords in the Christian cause; the second contained the *priests*, who were to officiate in the churches that belonged to their order, and the third contained the *serving brethren*, or the soldiers of low condition. This order, on many occasions, gave eminent proofs of resolution and valour, and acquired great opulence by their heroic exploits. When not engaged in war, the various duties of the hospital occupied the knights,

* Jerusalem was taken A.D. 1099, by the French Princes, who joined in the crusade, and Godfrey of Bouillon, commonly called the Christian Hercules, their chief, was made the first monarch of the new kingdom.

and they were most sedulous in their attention to the wounded soldiers, or worn-out pilgrims.

When Palestine was irrecoverably lost to the Christians, the Knights of St. John passed into the Isle of Cyprus; they afterwards possessed themselves of the Isle of Rhodes, where they remained a considerable time; but being finally driven from thence by the Turks, they received from the Emperor Charles V. a grant of the Isle of Malta, where the chief, or grand commander of this order, still resides.

This order came into England in the reign of Henry the First, and was established at Clerkenwell, by Jordan Briset of Wellinghall, in Kent. The original edifice was set fire to, and destroyed by Wat Tyler's rebels, A.D. 1381. The new building was not perfectly finished till A.D. 1504. Bucklands, in Somersetshire, was the principal house in England for the nuns, or sisters of the order of St. John.

Knights-Templars.

Another religious order, which was entirely of a military nature, was that of the "Knights-Templars," who derived their name from a palace adjoining the Temple at Jerusalem, which was appropriated to their use by Baldwin I. The foundation of this order was laid at Jerusalem, A.D. 1118, by Hugh de Payens, and Geoffrey de St. Aumer, and seven other per-

sons, whose names are unknown. These nine persons dedicated themselves to the service of God in a manner resembling the regular canons, and professed solemnly to observe the three monastic vows. This order was confirmed in the council of Troyes, and subjected to a rule of discipline drawn up by St. Bernard. The masters of the chapter of the order warned candidates for admission of the pains and dangers to which they would be exposed. They must rise when they wished to sleep; they must endure fatigue when they required repose; they must suffer hunger and thirst when they wished to eat and drink; and they must go into a different country to the one in which they wished to remain. These warlike Templars were to defend and support the cause of Christianity by force of arms: to have the superintendence of the public roads; and to protect pilgrims who came to visit Jerusalem from the insults and barbarity of the Mahomedans. They received from Pope Honorius II. a white mantle without a cross, as their regular habit. Pope Eugene III. commanded them to wear red crosses, and they were taught that the white garment was symbolical of the purity of their lives and professions, and the red crosses were emblematical of the martyrdom which they would willingly undergo, in defending the Holy Land from the hostile inroads of the infidels.

They feared neither the number nor the powers of their foes, "because," said they, "conquest stands not in the multitude of an host, but strength comes from heaven." They were more desirous of victory than of glory—more anxious to be dreaded than admired. All their confidence was placed in the God of battles; and fighting for his cause, they sought either certain victory, or a holy and honourable death. The order soon rose into power and dignity. Its eminent services in the cause of Christendom were cheerfully repaid by a general exemption from the controul of, as well as from contributions to, the clergy.

The Templars wore linen coifs, and red caps close over them; shirts and stockings of twisted mail, a sopra vest, and broad belts, with swords inserted. Over the whole was a white cloak touching the ground. In opposition to the practice of most religious orders, the Templars wore long beards. The Knights-Templars came into England in the beginning of Stephen's reign. Their principal station was on the south side of Holborn, near Southampton Buildings; but they afterwards removed into Fleet-street.*

The great benefactor to the English Templars was Roger de Mowbray, who accompanied Louis VII. to

* Dugdale, Origin. Jurid., c. 57.

the Holy Land, A.D. 1148. He granted to the order various manors in Leicestershire. The knights, as an honourable return, gave him the privilege of pardoning any Templar who was doing penance. They, however, afforded him the more valuable service of ransoming him from the Saracens, after the battle of Tiberias; for one journey to Palestine did not satisfy this pious chieftain.

At length the arrogancy and cruelty of this order having, through a long course of uninterrupted prosperity, attained a considerable height, their privileges were revoked, and their order suppressed with much severity, by a decree of the council of Vienne, in Dauphiné, in the fourteenth century.

Teutonic Order.

This order, in some measure, resembled the first or Trinitarians, inasmuch as the care of the poor, and relief of the sick, were not excluded from its prescribed services, although it was a military institution. The members were distinguished by the title of Teutonic Knights of St. Mary of Jerusalem: but with regard to its origin nothing is positively known anterior to A.D. 1190, in which year the siege of Acre took place. During this long and memorable siege, several pious and charitable merchants of

Bremen and Lubeck, moved with compassion at the sight of the miseries which the besiegers suffered in the midst of their success, determined to devote themselves entirely to the service of the sick and wounded soldiers. They accordingly erected a kind of hospital, where they gave constant attendance on all the unhappy objects whose sufferings compelled them to have recourse to their charity, This pious undertaking was so agreeable to the German princes, who were present at this terrible siege, that they determined to form a fraternity of German knights, to bring it to perfection. Their resolution was highly approved by Pope Celestine III., who confirmed the new order by a bull issued A.D. 1192.* This order was entirely appropriated to the Germans, as its name intimates; and even of them, none were admitted into it, except such as were of illustrious birth. The support of Christianity, the defence of the Holy Land, and the relief of the poor and needy, were the important duties and services to which the Teutonic Knights devoted themselves by a solemn vow. Austerity and frugality were the chief characteristics of this order; and their outward distinguishing badge was a white mantle, with a black

* This order does not strictly come within the scope of this work, which is confined to orders connected with England; but the other two orders seemed to be incomplete without some notice of it.

cross upon it. When the Teutonic knights were driven out of Palestine by the Turks, they made themselves masters of Prussia, Livonia, Courland, and Semi-Gallia; but, in process of time, their victorious arms received several checks, and at length they were deprived of their richest provinces, although they still retain a certain portion of their ancient territories.

Knight of Jerusalem.

Fountains Abbey.

CHAPTER XIX.

SKETCHES OF SOME OF THE LATER MONASTERIES. FOUNTAINS. TINTERN. OSENEY. STONELEY.

"By such examples moved to unbought pains,
The people work like congregated bees;
Eager to build the quiet fortresses,
Where Piety, as they believe, obtains
From Heaven a general blessing: timely rains
Or needful sunshine, prosperous enterprize,
Justice and peace."

WORDSWORTH.

Fountains Abbey.

ONE of the most celebrated of our Cistercian monasteries was that of Fountains, which owed its founda-

tion to the circumstance of thirteen Benedictine monks of St. Mary's, near York, leaving their house, A.D. 1132, with a design to observe a stricter rule than that under which they lived. Their intention having been communicated to Thurstan, Archbishop of York, he gave them a place then called Skeldale, not far from Ripon, where they founded an abbey of the Cistercian order, and dedicated it to the honour of the Blessed Virgin. Hugh, Dean of York, and Serlo and Tosti, two canons of that cathedral, rank among the earliest benefactors to this house. Their example was soon followed by Robert de Sartis, and his wife Raganilda, who bestowed upon the monks the town of Harleshows, with the adjacent fields and forest of Warkesall. Serlo de Pembroke gave the village of Caiton; and the abbot soon after obtained the grange of Aldeburgh. These were the first possessions which the monks of Fountains obtained. They were, however, a kind of nucleus, which in time increasing, rendered this one of the most important abbeys of the north.

The prosperity of this monastery was not uninterrupted, and its inmates shared that chequered fortune which was the portion of the twelfth and following centuries. In the year 1140, it appears that William, Archbishop of York, having, for some cause or other, been deposed, his deposition highly

enraged his partizans, and some of the soldiers who favoured his cause suspecting that Henry, the Abbot of Fountains, was the cause of the archbishop's disgrace, went to that monastery in search of the obnoxious abbot; but not finding him, they wreaked their vengeance on the buildings, by burning the monastery and half the oratory. John de Eboraco, a subsequent abbot of Fountains, commenced the rebuilding of the church soon after the year 1204, by laying the foundations, and raising some of the pillars. This work was carried on by John Pheed, the next abbot, and subsequently Bishop of Ely; and was completed by his successor, John de Cantia. This abbot caused nine altars to be erected, and built the cloister, the infirmary, and the apartment for the entertainment of the poor. He also added to the new work in the chancel an ornamental pavement. The revenues of the convent did not, however, keep pace with the grandeur of the buildings, since A.D. 1294, John le Romaine, Archbishop of York, wrote to those monks who were sent over as visitors of the houses of the Cistercian order in England, informing them of the injured state of Fountains Abbey, and of the great necessity which the monks were experiencing.

The monks of Fountains were likewise great sufferers by the invasions of the Scots, who burnt many

of their houses, and destroyed the produce of their lands. In consequence of these misfortunes, A.D. 1319, being the 13th of King Edward the Second, the king granted them an exemption from the payment of taxes. This monastery obtained, at different times, many charters of privileges and confirmations; and at the dissolution, the clear revenue amounted to £998. 6s. 8½d.: the gross income to £1173. 0s. 7½d.

The abbey of Fountains having, at its establishment, been placed in subjection to the monastery of Clareval, and St. Bernard, the pious founder of that house, being acknowledged as its head, he took a lively interest in the welfare of his adopted sons, and from time to time favoured them with his paternal advice.

To Richard, the first abbot, and his monks, he thus wrote:—

"To my dearly-beloved and longed-for brethren, Richard the abbot, and those who are with him, brother Bernard, Abbot of Clareval, health. With what joy have we heard and learnt those things which our brothers have related to us; even as they found that ye had again been warmed by the fire of God, that from weakness ye had waxed strong, and that ye were renewed in holiness. It is the finger of God secretly working, wholesomely changing you,

not indeed into good men from being bad, but advancing you in goodness. Who will grant to me that I may cross over and behold this great sight! For that advancement is not less wonderful and pleasing to me, than that change, unless you would more easily find worldly men changed to that which is good, than any from among the religious advanced to that which is better. It is a very rare occurrence that any one should advance ever so little from that position to which he has attained in religion. Your conduct, beloved, which is as remarkable as it is advantageous, not only delights us who desire earnestly to be the servants of your holiness, but also the whole city of God, since in proportion to its rarity is its value. It is even necessary for security to exceed that degree of mediocrity which borders upon deficiency, and to shun that lukewarmness which provokes the displeasure of God.* It is necessary to do this for conscience's sake. Whether it is safe for those who have professed to embrace a holy rule, to stop short of complete purity, ye yourselves have perceived. We suffer grief because evil is daily increasing, and my messenger being in haste, I am compelled to express my full affection with a slender pen, and to enclose it in a small sheet of paper. But what is wanting our brother will supply in words." Thus

* Rev. iii. v. 16.

wrote the celebrated St. Bernard to the newly-founded convent of Fountains; and from this simple letter we learn that a fervent and humble devotion was the characteristic of the monastics of those days, although the Catholic Church had in no little degree degenerated from the purer doctrines of an earlier age. The Abbot of Clareval continued to express his interest in the welfare of the English Cistercians, and to admonish and advise the ecclesiastics connected with the order, as occasions presented themselves.

This abbey became the parent of many others, among which may be noticed those of Kirkstall and Kirkstead.

Tintern Abbey.

The magnificent ruins which remain to tell the tale of desolation, render Tintern Abbey an object of intense interest to the lover of antiquities, as well as to the lover of picturesque scenery. This abbey, dedicated to St. Mary, was founded A.D. 1131, by Walter de Clare, the grandson of Walter Fitzosbert, Earl of Ew: and it was placed under the Cistercian rule. Besides the endowment of the founder, this abbey received various benefactions in possessions and privileges; but it never attained any considerable eminence among our institutions; and this

sketch is introduced more on account of the present interest which the abbey possesses, than from any importance which it originally enjoyed. The ruins which still remain are exceedingly rich in architectural beauties, and exemplify in language which cannot be gainsaid, the reverential feelings of our ancestors. The inside perspective of the church is far superior to anything of the kind in the kingdom. The eye passes rapidly along a range of elegant Gothic pillars, of that style which forms a transition from early English to Decorated, and glancing under the lofty arches which supported the tower, fixes itself on the splendid relics of the eastern window. The length of the nave, the height of the walls, the aspiring form of the pointed arches, and the size of the east window, which terminates the perspective, cause the first feelings, on entering the church at the west end, to be those of astonishment mingled with awe. But as those emotions subside, and the mind descends from the contemplation of the whole to an examination of the parts, it is no less struck with the regularity of the plan, the lightness of the architecture, and the delicacy of the ornaments. It then feels that elegance is no less its characteristic than grandeur, and that the whole is a combination of the sublime and beautiful. The church was constructed in the form of a cross, and is

an excellent specimen of the transition from the Early English to the Decorated style of architecture. The roof is fallen in, but the shell is entire; all the pillars are standing, except those which divided the nave from the north aisle, but their situation is marked by the remains of their bases. The four lofty arches which supported the tower, spring high in the air; and though reduced to narrow rims of stone, yet they still preserve their original form. The arches and pillars of the choir and transepts are complete; the form of the windows may still be discriminated, and the frame of the west window is still in perfect preservation. The design of the tracery is extremely elegant, and when decorated with stained glass, must have produced a fine effect. The general form of the east window is entire, but the frame is much dilapidated; it occupies the whole breadth of the choir, and is divided into two large and equal compartments by a slender shaft, not less than fifty feet in height, which has an appearance of singular lightness, and in particular points of view, seems suspended in the air.

Nature has added her ornaments to the decorations of arts; some of the windows are wholly obscured; others partially shaded by ivy, or edged with lighter foliage; portions of which creep along the walls, wind about the pillars, wreath the capitals,

or hanging down, give a chastened solemnity to the scene.

Instead of dilapidated fragments, overspread with weeds, and choked with brambles, the floor is covered with smooth turf, which being kept to the original level of the floor of the church, exhibits to great advantage the beauty of its proportions, heightens the effect of the grey stone, gives relief to the clustered pillars, and affords an easy access to every part. Ornamented fragments of the roof, remains of cornices and columns, rich pieces of sculpture, sepulchral stones, and mutilated figures of monks and heroes, whose ashes repose within these walls, are scattered on the greensward, and serve to contrast in a striking manner, the present desolation with the former splendour of this monastery.*

It is scarcely possible to view monastic ruins, with their architectural beauties still remaining, and shaming into insignificance the attempts of modern art, without a feeling of regret that they have been so irrecoverably destroyed: that no consideration of former benefits, no respect for institutions which numbered among their founders the Fathers of the Church, could check the hand of the spoiler; and that buildings, which were dedicated to the honour of God, and adorned with costly ornaments, which

* Coxe's Historical Tour in Monmouthshire.

attest the piety of the builders,—are either the waste habitations of owls and bats, or still further desecrated by the uses to which they are often applied. These feelings are more intense when excited by the contemplation of such a ruin as that of Tintern: and that mind must indeed have deeply absorbed the utilitarian principles of the present day, which does not experience them.

Many are the ruins of monastic edifices in these kingdoms, which awaken in a serious mind sentiments similar to those so eloquently expressed by Dr. Johnson, when visiting the far-famed ruins of Iona: "We were now treading that illustrious island which was once the luminary of the Caledonian regions, whence savage clans, and roving barbarians, derived the benefits of knowledge and the blessings of religion. To abstract the mind from all local emotion would be impossible if it were endeavoured, and would be foolish if it were possible. Whatever withdraws us from the powers of our senses,—whatever makes the past, the distant, or the future, predominate over the present, advances us in the dignity of thinking beings. Far from me, and from my friends, be such frigid philosophy, as may conduct us indifferent and unmoved over any ground which has been dignified by wisdom, bravery, or virtue. That man is little to be envied, whose patriotism would not

gain force upon the plain of Marathon, or whose piety would not grow warmer among the ruins of Iona."*

Oseney Abbey.

This abbey was founded A.D. 1129, upon one of the small islands formed by the river Isis, near the castle of Oxford, by Robert de Oilei, or D'Oylley, who placed there a convent of Augustine canons, and dedicated his foundation to the Virgin Mary. The origin of this establishment is attributed to Edith, the wife of D'Oylley, who is said to have frequently observed a number of magpies chattering on a tree near her favourite walk in the castle garden, and having consulted a canon of St. Frideswide as to the nature of the omen, he directed her either to build a church or found a monastery; and having decided upon the latter, she prevailed upon her husband to carry her wishes into execution. The first charter of endowment settled on the monks the Isle of Oseney, with the tithe of the founder's mills, and the churches of Kidlington, Weston, Hooknorton, Claindon, Seneston, and Chesterton, together with lands, in and near Oxford. This was followed by a more extensive charter, and encreased endowments. Robert de Oilei, the founder of Oseney Abbey, is said to have died about A.D. 1157. There were many other be-

* Works, vol. v., p. 73., ed. Murray.

nefactors, whose grants altogether amounted, at the time monastic property was surveyed, in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Henry the Eighth, to £775. 18s. 6½d. The foundation was, therefore, far from being rich; but as it was connected in various ways with the university of Oxford, and possesses many interesting associations, we have been induced to select it in our brief sketch of a few monasteries, to the exclusion of some which were more powerful, and possessed greater wealth.

Mr. Shelton has given the following particulars of the ancient state of this monastery, from the MSS. of Anthony a Wood:—

"Within the great gate, which was on the north side of the abbey, was a spacious court, or quadrangle, for the most part of freestone, and situated at the west end of the church, from the gate on the left hand; and so all under the said end of the church was a spacious cloister, decked and beautified with a boarded roof, having the arms of benefactors thereon; as also several rebusses and allusions referring to those persons, especially the abbots, who contributed towards the building, the chief of whom was John Leech,* who built three parts of the cloister, that led from the refectory, which was on the south side of the quadrangle, to be joined to the cloister at the west end of the church, and so thereby made it come

* John Leech was elected abbot, Oct. 19, A.D. 1235.

half, or more, round the court. Going through the cloister, the passenger was conducted to the refectory, or common hall, which was of a large, curious structure; it was rebuilt about A.D. 1247, partly with the money granted for that purpose, and partly by Abbot Leech. It was the common place of resort, and where all met, at the sound of the bell, to take their diet. Their meat was served from the kitchen adjoining the refectory on the west side; both ample and convenient for the purpose, where, for their accommodation, they had a cistern supplied by a pipe that came from the lavatory, or conduit that stood in the middle of the court. Behind the refectory, on the south side, was the Nosocomium, or infirmary; or, as the ancient word is, Firmory; which was a place allotted purposely for sick monks, when they were removed from their chambers, and where they had all things convenient for their condition. Adjoining to it was a little chapel, or oratory, where there were prayers said to them every day by one of the officers of the church. This chapel, with the infirmary itself, was built the same year beforementioned, by Abbot Leech, who erected the most part of it, except the two western spaces. The next place observable was the dormitory, commonly, for brevity, called the dortor. It was a long room, divided into several partitions, in every one of which was a bed. In this dortor all the canons and monks,

except those that were aged, infirm, or employed with offices belonging to the abbey, slept. Every one had his bed to himself, and that also open at the feet towards the common passage, that the prefect, as he went by, might see that each one was in his place. After every one of them was reposed, there was a candle set up to burn for most part of the night; or at least to serve till the time of performing their nocturns, or prayers appointed for certain hours in the night season. The candle being lighted, the keys of the dorter were carried to the prefect, or vicar, by the servitor; and by him again, at the appointed time in the morning, opened. Then each monk received his summons to rise, and had half-an-hour, or thereabouts, allowed them, both in making up themselves and their beds. At the west end of the church was situated the campanile, or tower, which enduring the brunt, stood firm and whole till about 1644. It contained a large and melodious ring of bells,* thought to be the best in

* The origin of bells is unknown; but the large kind which is used in churches, is said to have been invented by Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, in Campania, in the fourth century, whence the term *Campana* is derived. It is also unknown at what time they were generally introduced into churches, although it is ascertained that, at a comparatively early period, they were used in churches for various purposes. Bede, in speaking of the death of the Abbess of St. Hilda, alludes to one of the uses to which bells were applied, when he says that "One of the sisters of a distant monastery, as she was sleeping, thought she heard the well-known sound of that bell which called them to prayers, when any of them had departed this life."—Bedæ Eccles. Hist. lib. iv. c. 23.

England. At the first foundation there were but three bells, beside the Saint and Litany bells; but by Abbot Leech they were increased to the number of seven. The bells were christened, and called by the names of Hauteclare, Doucement, Austyn, Marie, Gabriel, and John. All which, for the most part, towards the suppression, being before broken, and recast, had gotten new names; which, by tradition, we have thus: Mary and Jesus, Meribus and Lucas, New Bell and Thomas, Conger and Godston; which Thomas, now commonly called "*Great Tom of Christchurch*," had this inscription not long since remaining upon it, "*In Thomæ laude resono* BIM BOM *sine fraude*;" and was accounted six feet in diameter, which is eighteen feet in compass. This church is said to have been used in the days of Queen Elizabeth."*

Upon the erection of the new bishoprick by King Henry the Eighth, in 1542, the abbey of Oseney was changed into a cathedral church of Christ, and the Blessed Virgin, wherein were settled a dean, prebendaries, &c., who were to be the chapter of the Bishop of Oxfordshire, whose palace was to be at Gloucester Hall; but this establishment did not con-

* Wood's Notes, when these particulars were taken, are dated Nov. 26, 1661. The great bell above-mentioned is still in existence, and bears the original inscription.

tinue above three or four years, when, in 1546, the conventual church of St. Frideswide, then called King Henry the Eighth's College, was made the cathedral, and called Christ Church.*

At present there are no intelligible traces of the buildings of Oseney Abbey; the site is now a marshy meadow, lying between the Gloucester and Abingdon roads, out of Oxford. A print of the tower, and some adjoining parts of the structure, has been re-engraved in Skelton's "Oxonia Antiqua restaurata."

Stoneley Priory.

This priory is stated by Tanner to have been translated from Radmore, in Staffordshire, by King Henry II., A.D. 1154, and the following history of it is thus detailed by Dugdale, in his history of Warwickshire :—

"The order of Cistercian monks being propagated in England towards the latter end of Henry the First's reign, found, in a short time, many pious benefactors in several parts of the kingdom, who bountifully bestowed upon them very large possessions, in such places as were most proper for them to seat

* Monasticon, vol. 6, p. 249.

themselves with least disturbance in their strict and holy rule of serving God: among which were the Empress* and King Stephen; who, though otherwise opposite to each other, yet in this good work concurred; granting a certain desert called Radmore, lying in the forest of Canok, in Staffordshire, a mile southward from Beaudesert, unto Clement and Hervcie, two devout hermits, with others of their society; as also a certain land called Mellesho, for tillage and pasturing of cattle. Which concessions Roger de Clinton, then Bishop of Chester, not only confirmed, but gave them liberty to betake themselves to what regular life soever they, through God's direction, should make choice of; and to receive and instruct any such women, who, having devoted their lives to God's service, should do the like. But after they found what molestation they had by the foresters, who riding frequently that way, much disturbed their devotions, they humbly besought the said empress that she would vouchsafe to change their seat. Whereupon, having a great affection for the Cistercian order, she told them, if they would undergo that rule, she would grant their request. To which proposal they, after some deliberation, assenting, the same place of Radmore was made an

* Matilda, daughter of Henry I., and mother of Henry II.

abbey, one William, the principal of those religious persons, being elected the first abbot there; unto whom Henry, Duke of Normandy, son to the said empress, by his charter, granted and confirmed, not only the same Radmore, with the appurtenances, viz,, Mellesho and Wirley for tillage and pasture, as also Hedenesford for pasture and pannage, with liberty to build a church, and such houses as might be fit for their habitation; but gave them the town of Canok, with the appurtenances, and the mill at Wirley, with all belonging thereto.

"Which good work so begun wanted not the bounty of divers other pious men to carry it on,—Osbert de Ardern giving them his lordship of Merston; William Croc all the right he had in Wirley, to the intent they would receive him into their fraternity, and vouchsafe his body burial there. Geoffrey de Clinton, three yards of land at Werlavestone, and one hide in Radway; and Roger de Clinton, Bishop of Chester, before-mentioned, two hides more in the said town of Radway.

"Shortly after which, this new abbot and his monks, not yet well instructed in the Cistercian discipline, requested Hamon, the second abbot of Bordesley, in Worcestershire, to send two of his convent to inform them therein. Which being accordingly done, there grew great friendship betwixt these two monasteries,

the monks of Bordesley always giving courteous entertainment to those of Radmore, whensoever they had occasion to visit their grange at Radway. Howbeit, at Radmore they continued no more than twelve years; for finding the foresters not only troublesome, but, by their frequent visits somewhat burdensome also, they became petitioners to King Henry the Second, on the 19th day of December, in the very first year of his reign, making use of his mother the empress, their patroness, to mediate, that he would be pleased to translate them to his manor of Stoneley, in Warwickshire, and accept of what they had at Radmore in exchange for that place. Whereunto the king graciously yielding, they came from Radmore, and first seated themselves where the grange at Cryfield now stands, the inhabitants thereof then removing to Hurst; but finding inconvenience there, as it was so near the public road, they made choice of another place, a little below the confluence of Sow and Avon, almost environed with the river; having that thick wood called Echels on the north; and then began the foundation of their church; whereof the first stone being laid April 13, A. D. 1154, the church-yard was consecrated by Walter Durdent, Bishop of Coventry, with the assent of the prior and canons of Kenilworth, to whom the parish church of Stoneley appertained; upon

condition that the said monks should no way diminish the rights due to the said church of Stoneley, but make just payment of all tithes to the same, for such grounds as they should till within that parish; all which the said King Henry, by his charter, confirmed.

"And to the end that these monks should have Stoneley entire, the said king gave command by his precepts to the sheriff of the county, to assign the freeholders there as much land in value, in other places, by way of exchange for that which they had there. But there being a custom among the Cistercian monks, that no new monastery of the same rule should, without licence of the next adjacent abbey of that order, be erected: these, upon their translation hither, were constrained to come to an agreement with the monks of Combe; who made a condition on granting their licence, that if they, the monks of Combe, had a mind to erect any granges, or remove the site of their abbey, the monks of Stoneley should not hinder them. Which agreement was made in the presence of the abbots of Waverley, Bordesley, and Merivale, A.D. 1155."*

Although the king conceded to the monks of Stoneley the freehold possession of Stoneley, yet it

* Hist. Warw. edit. 1656, p. 170.

appears that, in so doing, he did not yield all the rights which belonged to that domain. In the fifteenth year of his reign, *i. e.* about fourteen years after Stoneley had been granted to certain monks, the Sheriff of Warwickshire accounted to the king for monies which arose from the pasturage of the woods of Stoneley—monies which would have gone into the exchequer of the monastery, had the monks been invested with all the rights belonging to their possessions. In the reign of King John, the privileges of the monastery were so generally slighted, that William de Tyso, being at that time abbot, repaired to the king, and laid before him the grievances under which his abbey was suffering; and, in consideration of the sum of two hundred marks, and a present of two white palfreys, he obtained a confirmation of the charters which had been previously granted. The monks of Stoneley had many other benefactors besides royalty; and at length their possessions, as well as privileges, were very considerable. This monastery, however, was not in the receipt of a sufficient sum* to save it from the first monastic spoliation. By the survey which was taken in the twenty-sixth year of the reign of Henry the Eighth,

* The first suppression of monasteries included all those whose annual revenues did not amount to £200.

the revenue of the abbey was certified to be £151. 3s. 1½d. over and above all reprises. Of which the sum of £4s. 5s. 4d. was then reckoned for the charge of eight quarters of rye, made into bread, at 5s. the quarter; three quarters of malt in beer, at 4s. the quarter; and two hundred herrings, at 20d. the hundred; all which were given yearly in alms to poor and impotent people, on Maundy Thursday, at the washing of their feet.

And besides this, the sum of £5. 7s. 8d. per annum was charged for the relief of the poor; being expended in the purchase of seventeen quarters and a half of rye, which was made into bread; six quarters of malt, which was made into beer. At the dissolution of this house, the monks were chiefly dispersed among the other religious houses which were then undissolved, and the abbot, Thomas Tutbury, had a pension of £23. per annum assigned to him during his life.

In the thirtieth year of Henry the Eighth, the site of this abbey was granted to Charles Brandon, Duke of Suffolk; and from him it passed to the Cavendishes, and eventually became the property of the family of Leigh, in which family it still continues.

The common seal of this abbey is a figure of the Virgin seated, crowned, and bearing in her right

hand a sceptre, in her left the infant Jesus naked; on each side of her is a female figure standing; the legend is "Sigill. Abbtis. et Conventus, B. Marie D'Stonley."*

* Dugdale's Monasticon, vol. 6. p. 446.

Knight of St. John.

CHAPTER XX.

ALIEN PRIORIES.

"No distance breaks the tie of blood;
Brothers are brothers evermore;
Nor wrong, nor wrath of deadliest mood,
That magic may o'erpower:
Oft ere the common source be known,
The kindred drops will claim their own,
And throbbing pulses silently
Move heart towards heart by sympathy."

CHRISTIAN YEAR.

Alien Priories.

ALIEN Priories were cells of the religious houses in England, which belonged to foreign monasteries; for when manors or tithes were given to foreign convents, the monks, either for the purpose of increasing their own rule, or rather, perhaps, in order to have faithful stewards of their revenues, built a small

convent here, for the reception of such a number as they thought proper, and constituted priors over them. Within these cells there was the same distinction as in those priories which were cells subordinate to some great abbey. Some of these were conventual, and having priors of their own choosing, thereby became entire societies within themselves, and received the revenues belonging to their several houses for their own use and benefit, paying only an acknowledgment to the foreign house; but others depended entirely on the foreign houses, who appointed and removed their priors at pleasure. These transmitted all their revenues to the foreign houses to which they appertained, and, on this account, their estates were frequently seized to supply the means of carrying on the wars between England and France, and restored to them again on the return of peace. These alien priories were generally founded by those who had founded foreign abbeys, or by some members of their family.

The whole number of these institutions is not exactly known; but it has been ascertained that it exceeded one hundred. The alien priories were first seized by King Edward the First, A.D. 1285, on the breaking out of the war between France and England; and it appears, from a roll, that Edward the

Second also seized them, although this circumstance seems to have escaped the notice of our historians.

A.D. 1337, King Edward the Third confiscated their estates, and let out the priories themselves, with all their lands and tenements, at his pleasure, for twenty-three years; at the end of which term peace being concluded between France and England, he restored their estates, A.D. 1361. At other times, he granted their lands, or pensions out of them, to several of his nobles, and, in short, these institutions were generally seized upon in any of the exigencies which occurred in those times. Their condition was not improved by the accession of Richard the Second to the throne; and it was not until King Henry the Fourth began his reign, that these priories experienced any royal favour. He restored all the conventual ones, only reserving to himself, in time of war, what they paid, in time of peace, to the foreign abbeys. Their prosperity, however, was not of long duration; for they were all dissolved by act of parliament, in the second year of the reign of Henry the Fifth, and their estates were vested in the crown, except some lands which were granted to the college of Fotheringhay. These lands were for the most part appropriated to religious uses, and King Henry the Sixth endowed his foundations at Eton and Cam-

bridge with some of them. Some found their way into private hands, and the remainder of them was granted to Archbishop Chicheley, and became part of his and the royal foundations.*

* Mon. Angl., vol. viii. p. 985.

Augustine Monk.

CHAPTER XXI.

RISE OF THE MENDICANT ORDERS. DOMINICANS AND FRANCISCANS. FRIARS. ORIGIN OF COLLEGES. ENDOWMENT OF COLLEGES.

"For first I frayned the freres, and they me full tolden,
That al the fruyt of the fayth was in her foure orders,
And the cofres of Christendom, and the keie bothen,
And the lock of byleve lyeth locken in her hondes."

PIERCE PLOWMAN'S CREDE.

THE thirteenth century was distinguished by the rise of some new religious orders, which, although not strictly speaking monastic bodies, yet demand a passing notice in this sketch. These orders speedily increased, and soon eclipsed in popular estimation even the ancient monastic establishments. Two, however, far exceeded in reputation all the other sects into which these irregular orders were divided,

viz., the Dominicans and Franciscans, also known by the names of the "Friar Preachers," and "Friar Minors."* They were called into existence by the

* The former of these orders derived its name from Dominic, a Spaniard by birth, a descendant of the illustrious house of Guzman, and a canon of Osma. He was a man of a fiery and impetuous temper, and being greatly exasperated by the commotions which the heretics of different denominations had excited in the Church, set out with a few companions, in order to combat the increasing sectaries. The first objects to which he directed his attention were the Waldenses, whom he attacked with the power of eloquence, the force of arms, the subtlety of controversial writings, and the terrors of the "Inquisition," which owed its form to this violent and sanguinary man. He then proceeded into Italy, where he was received with every mark of affection and regard by Pope Innocent III., and obtained permission to erect a new fraternity, which should have for its object the extirpation of heresy. The first rule which he adopted for the government of his society was that of the canons of St. Augustine, to which, however, he added several austere observances. Among other severe precepts, he enjoined an occasional abstinence from anything liquid during the space of eight days. He afterwards changed the discipline of the canons for that of the monks, and obliged the brethren of his order to take a vow of absolute poverty, and to abandon all their revenues and possessions.

Notwithstanding their vow of poverty, the Dominicans had houses in every part of England, having obtained their first footing in Oxford, A.D 1221. Soon afterwards they founded a house in London; and A.D. 1276, the Mayor and aldermen of London gave them two whole streets near the river Thames, where they erected a very large convent, whence that place is still called the Black Friars, being the name by which the Dominicans were commonly known in England. At the dissolution they had forty-three houses. The other order derived its name from its founder, Francis, who was the son of a merchant of Assisi, in the province of Umbria, and in his youth led a debauched and dissolute life. On his recovery from a dangerous illness, which was the consequence of his intemperance, he changed his course of living, and gave himself up to an extravagant kind of devotion. About A.D. 1208, he happened to be in a church, where he heard that passage of Scripture read, in which Christ addressed his Apostles as

pope, and were employed by him in order to check and repress the Waldenses, who were at that time opposing, with much zeal and learning, the corrupt doctrines, and usurping innovations of the papal see.

For this purpose, they had institutions widely differing from the monastic orders. Instead of leading a quiet and contemplative life in the recesses of the cloister, they were to travel about, and preach among the people, warning them of the danger of lending an ear to the impugners of the Church of Rome. They were enjoined to exhibit a perfect life, by living in poverty, and submitting with patience to all its attendant hardships; to work whenever they could find employment; and when they were unable to meet with it, they were permitted to beg. Hence they were called mendicants.

follows: *Provide neither gold nor silver, nor brass in your purses, nor scrip for your journey, neither two coats, neither shoes, nor yet staves; for the workman is worthy of his meat.*—St. Matth. x. 9, 10. This produced a powerful effect upon his mind, making him consider that a voluntary and absolute poverty was the essence of the Gospel, and the soul of religion, and inducing him to prescribe this poverty as a sacred rule to himself, and to the few who followed him. Such was the commencement of the celebrated Franciscan order, which was patronized by Innocent III., and afterwards approved and confirmed by Honorius III. A.D. 1223, as it seemed to those pontiffs to be well adapted to the then state of the Church, and calculated for restoring its declining credit. Francis would not suffer the monks of his order to be called Fratres, *i.e.* brethren, or friars; but Fraterculi, *i.e.* little brethren, or friars minor, by which denomination they are still distinguished. They appeared in England in the reign of Henry the Third, and their first establishment was at Canterbury, A.D. 1224. At the dissolution of monasteries, they had fifty-five houses in England.

Although they thus made an ostentatious profession of humility, and of contempt for the goods of this life, they were not very consistent in carrying out their principles.

They courted the favour of the rich rather than that of the poor; and whenever they gained admission into the families of the wealthy, they were most assiduous in their attentions; and so far did their influence extend, that none of the faithful thought themselves in the way of salvation, unless they were guided by the counsels of these friars.* Having succeeded in gaining admittance to the king's council, they were earnest and unremitting in their solicitations for new privileges; which being granted, speedily rendered them objects of hatred and envy among the monastic orders, and were the fruitful source of dissensions among themselves.

The following anecdote is sufficient to show the manner in which the friars pushed their way, and the bold recourse which they had to miracles in order to support their pretensions against the regular monastics:—

Some friars of the order of St. Francis being on their way to Oxford, were compelled by the rain and stormy weather to take shelter in an abbey of Benedictines, which was situated in a wood. A young

* Matthew Paris, Anno 1243.

monk having chanced to spy them, thought from their dress that they were jugglers, and ran immediately to inform the abbot, who thinking that they would afford some sport, ordered them to be admitted. But when they informed him they were only poor friars come to crave charity, they were again thrust out of doors. The only person who took pity upon them was a young monk, who conveyed them secretly into a hay loft, and having given them some bread and beer, he recommended himself to their prayers. After which he went to bed, and in his sleep he saw our Lord sitting upon a bright throne, who with an angry look and a terrible voice, said, "Go and bring before me all the monks of this monastery;" which having been done, he saw on the other side a poor beggar coming in a friar's habit. It was St. Francis himself! This man made his bitter complaint to our Lord, saying, "Just Judge! the blood of my poor brethren, which these wretched monks have spilt this night, as much as in them lay, by denying them bread and shelter, in so great extremity; the blood, I say, of my poor brethren, who have left all for Thy sake, and are come hither to seek the souls which Thou hast redeemed by Thy precious death, demands vengeance for so great a cruelty: they have denied to Thy servants what they were ready to grant to morris-dancers,

as they took them at first to be." Then it appeared that our Lord, in fierce anger, said to the abbot, "What order art thou of?" He answered, "Of St. Bennet." Christ, turning to St. Benedict, said, "Is what this abbot says, true?" "No Lord," said the saint, "he is the destroyer of my religion, both he and his companions; because I have ordered in my rule, that the abbot should receive all strangers, of what condition soever, to his table, and these have denied them the most necessary things." Then our Lord commanded them to be hanged that very hour upon a tree, which was in the midst of the cloister. After which, looking on the monk who had exercised mercy towards the friars, he demanded of him what order he was of. This fellow seeing in what manner the Benedictines, his brethren, had been treated, said with fear and trembling, that he was of the order of that poor man who stood by. "Is it true, Francis," said Christ, "is this monk of thy order?" "Yes, answered Francis, "he belongs to me, and I receive him now as mine:" and as he was embracing him with all his strength, the monk awoke, and almost out of his senses ran to the abbot to tell him his vision; but he found him strangled, and black as coal in his chamber. From thence he went into the apartments of the monks, whom he found in the same manner without life, and their

tongues hanging out of their mouths.. This tragical accident being divulged all over England, caused the religion of St. Francis to meet with a better reception; and to such like fables may be, in a great measure, attributed that extraordinary prosperity which attended the doctrine of this new order, and which caused it in a few years to rival the splendour of the more ancient institutions.* Soon after they rose to eminence, they became distinguished for their proficiency in theology, and in the disputes which they held at Oxford and elsewhere, they manifested greater skill and ability than had ever before been witnessed; but at the same time, they had recourse to greater subtlety than became the subject, or than was expedient for discovering and establishing the truth. But notwithstanding the irregular nature of their institutions, and the erroneous system of theological instruction which they introduced, these orders in some measure supplied the deficiencies which were felt in monasteries. The instruction which was afforded by the Benedictines and other regular orders, was for the most part restricted to those who belonged to their respective societies; whereas the friars were constantly perambulating the kingdom, and were ready to instruct all who would avail themselves of their teaching.

* History of Monastical Orders, by D'Emillianne, p. 169.

About this time, too, colleges were first founded in our universities, and for two or three centuries their most learned members were of the orders of these friars, among whom we may mention Bacon, Kilwardby, and Alexander of Hales. The eminence which these orders attained by their learning was a powerful incentive to emulation in the ancient orders, and probably first suggested the design of sending students from the different monasteries to Oxford, and endowing colleges and halls there, and at Cambridge for their accommodation. It was soon found that excellence in learning could not be cultivated with *general* effect in the monasteries, as the duty of the choir, and other monastic services, left them but little time for private study. It had previously been thought sufficient if the abbot and the higher officers understood as much Latin as would enable them to execute their offices, and such a degree of proficiency was all that was *generally* sought. The difficulty of uniting the monastic discipline with a course of close study, appears to have first occurred to some of the great men who formed the court of Henry III. With a view of reconciling the two, Walter de Merton, then Chancellor of England, founded a college in Oxford, A.D. 1264, two or three years after John de Balliol had founded the college which still bears his name. About the same time, for there is some

uncertainty in these dates, viz. A.D. 1257, Hugo de Balsam, Prior of Ely, and then bishop of that see, founded Peter House in Cambridge, and afterwards modelled this new endowment on the plan of Merton. These colleges were founded with a view to train up young men for the higher officers in the abbeys, and to give them that kind of instruction which the monasteries could not afford, and which the preachers and minors were alone supposed to possess. This praiseworthy emulation received countenance from the three first Edwards, all of whom gave more encouragement to the new system than to the old monastic orders. The spirit which was thus excited, stimulated other patrons to build and endow colleges, so that at the death of Edward III. there were seven colleges built and endowed at Oxford, and six in Cambridge. But besides the royal favour, and this rivalship for fame, there was another cause which operated very powerfully in promoting these foundations and endowments. The statutes of mortmain* which were passed in the

* Mortmain, *in mortua manu*, *i. e.* in the possession of one who is dead, is an alienation of lands or tenements to any corporation ecclesiastical or temporal. But these purchases having been chiefly made by religious houses, in consequence of which the lands became perpetually inherent in one dead hand, have caused the general appellation of mortmain to be applied to such alienations; and the religious themselves have been principally considered in forming the statutes of mortmain.

reign of Edward I., stopped the ancient channels of liberality and charity; and these colleges, instead of

By the common law, any man might dispose of his lands to any other private man at his own discretion, especially when the feudal restraints of alienation were worn away. Yet in consequence of these, it was always, and is still necessary, for corporations to have a license from the crown to enable them to purchase lands; for as the king is the ultimate lord of every fee, he ought not, unless by his own consent, to lose his privilege of escheats and other feudal profits, by the vesting of lands in tenants that can never be attainted or die. And such licenses of mortmain seem to have been necessary among the Saxons, above sixty years before the Norman conquest. But besides this general license from the king, as lord paramount of the kingdom, it was also requisite, whenever there was a mesne or intermediate lord between the king and the alienor, to obtain his license also for the alienation of the specific land. And if no such license were obtained, the king or other lord might respectively enter on the lands so alienated in mortmain, as a forfeiture. The monastics had recourse to various expedients in order to overcome the obstacles which lay in the way of obtaining possessions, and such was their success, that their ample endowments drew down upon them the jealousy of the civil power, and procured the enactment of King Henry the Third's statute, by which all evasions of former statutes should render their proceedings void, and cause the lands in question to be forfeited to the lord of the fee. This, however, only extended to religious houses. Notwithstanding these, and other similar enactments, the crown always retained the power of granting a license of mortmain, so as to remit the forfeiture so far as related to its own rights; and to enable any spiritual, or other corporation, to purchase and hold any lands or tenements in perpetuity: which prerogative is declared and confirmed by the statute of Edward the Third.

After the dissolution of monasteries, the statutes of mortmain were altered so as to suit the change of circumstances; and even so lately as George the Second, a statute was enacted that no lands or tenements, or money to be laid out thereon shall be given for, or charged with any *charitable* uses whatsoever, unless by deed indented, and executed in the presence of two witnesses, twelve calendar months before the death of the donor, and enrolled in the Court of Chancery within six months after the execution (except stocks in

monasteries, became the prevailing objects of benevolence and piety. These new collegiate establishments being soon overstocked, and the monasteries being unable to find employment for all who were qualified for their service, a valuable and important addition was made to the secular clergy. The Benedictines throughout England having been roused by the prevailing spirit of the times, gave their sanction to the new system, and contributed largely towards the maintenance of students at the universities. In Edward the Second's time, the monks of Durham built and endowed Durham College in Oxford, for the purpose of training and educating their youth. This college is now known by the name of Trinity College; for having been included in the general suppression, it lay in ruins sixteen years, when it was re-endowed by Sir Thomas Pope. The monks of Gloucester built Gloucester College, now known as Worcester College, for the same purpose, and it was afterwards enlarged for the use of other

the public funds, which may be transferred within six months previous to the donor's death), and unless such gift be made to take effect immediately, and be without power of revocation: and that all other gifts shall be void. The two universities, their colleges, and the scholars upon the foundation of the colleges of Eton, Winchester, and Westminster, are excepted out of this act: but such exemption was granted with this proviso, that no college shall be at liberty to purchase more advowsons, than are equal in number to one moiety of the fellows or students upon the respective foundations."—*Blackstone*, book ii., ch. 18.

Benedictine monasteries. Canterbury College* was founded by Archbishop Islip, to educate youths for the supply of the abbey and cathedral of Canterbury. These endowments were made in Oxford; and in the reign of Edward IV. a prior was appointed in a provincial chapter of the Benedictines, to overlook and direct the studies of their youth in the University of Cambridge.

* Now part of Christ Church.

Bolton Abbey.

CHAPTER XXII.

GRADUAL DECAY OF THE MONASTIC SYSTEM IN ENGLAND.

"And must each shrine of simple state,
In purer days devote,
To holy names yet consecrate,
Where holy voices float,
In dust beneath their feet be trod,
Who make the people's voice a god?"

LYRA APOSTOLICA.

IN the early period of monastic establishments, the learning of the age was for the most part confined within their walls, but at the time when the preaching friars, and the friars minors appeared, the re-

gular monks were inferior in point of learning to their predecessors. There had been a gradual decay among them in this respect, and their highest attainments seem to have been such a knowledge of the Latin language as would enable them to understand what they chanted, and occasionally, perhaps, to write a letter. Nor was their proficiency in other branches of literature much greater. They were satisfied if they acquired as much arithmetic as would enable them to keep their accounts; the higher branches of mathematics were totally disregarded, and their learning altogether, in short, is equalled, if not surpassed by the lower forms of our public schools. This, be it remembered, was the *general* character of the monastic body at the period now referred to. There were individuals who stood in these respects far above the common class, and whose remains indicate a superior mind, cultivated with no ordinary care. But as the body, taken as a whole, had degenerated in their mental qualifications and acquirements, the superior activity of the new order threw them into the shade, until roused by their competitors for popularity, they again made use of those means which at an earlier period had been crowned with success. Besides the statutes of mortmain, Edward I. devised other means for curbing the power of the pope, and preventing the wealth of the

laity from increasing the revenues of the Church. The laws which were enacted for this purpose were often evaded, and the struggles which occurred between the monarch and clergy, were productive of much civil strife. In the reign of Edward III. the statutes of "præmunire"* were passed, a measure

* *Præmunire*, according to Blackstone, is a species of offence immediately affecting the king and his government, though not subject to capital punishment. It derives its name from the words of the writ which is issued preparatory to the prosecution of it: "*præmunire facias A. B.*"—forewarn A. B. that he appear before us to answer the contempt wherewith he stands charged; which contempt is particularly recited in the preamble to the writ. It took its origin from the exorbitant power claimed and exercised in England by the Pope, which was too heavy even for our ancestors to bear, although they acknowledged his spiritual jurisdiction. King Edward I. was the first monarch who set himself in earnest to shake off this servile yoke. He would not suffer his bishops to attend a general council, till they had sworn not to receive the papal benediction. He made light of all papal bulls as processes; attacking Scotland in defiance of one, and seizing the temporalities of his clergy, who under pretence of another, refused to pay a tax imposed by Parliament. In the thirty-fifth year of his reign, the first statute against papal provisions was made, which according to Sir Edward Coke, is the foundation of all the subsequent statutes of "præmunire;" which we rank as an offence immediately against the king, because every encouragement of the papal power is a diminution of the authority of the crown.

In the weak reign of Edward II. the pope again endeavoured to encroach, but the parliament withstood him; and it was one of the principal articles charged against that unhappy prince, that he had allowed papal bulls to be received. But Edward III. was a prince of a widely different temper; and in order to remedy the inconvenience which these bulls occasioned, he and his nobility first wrote a letter of expostulation to the pope; but receiving a menacing and contemptuous answer, in which he was informed that the Emperor of Germany and the French King had lately submitted to the Holy See; the king replied, that if both the Emperor and the French king should

which was intended to depress the civil power of the pope, and to break, if possible, the connection with

take the pope's part, he was ready to give battle to them both in defence of the liberties of his crown. This was followed by sharper and more penal laws against the papal interference, which enact severally, that the court of Rome shall present or collate to no bishopric or living in England; and that whoever disturbs any patron in the presentation to a living by virtue of a papal provision, such provisor shall pay fine and ransom to the king at his will, and be imprisoned till he renounces such provision; and the same punishment is inflicted on such as cite the king, or any of his subjects, to answer in the court of Rome.

In the reign of Richard II. it was found necessary to sharpen and strengthen these laws by more stringent enactments.

In the writ for the execution of all these statutes the words *præmunire facias*, being used in the citation of the accused parties, have in common parlance, been employed to denote not merely the writ, but also the offence itself, and in consequence of this the statute 16 Richard II., c. 5., which is the statute generally referred to by all subsequent statutes, is usually called the statute of "præmunire." This statute enacts, that whoever procures at Rome, or elsewhere, any translations, processes, excommunications, bulls, instruments, or other things which touch the king, against him, his crown, and realm, and all persons aiding and assisting therein, shall be put out of the king's protection, their lands and goods shall be forfeited to the king's use, and they shall be attached by their bodies to answer to the king and his council; or process of "præmunire" shall be made out against them, as in other cases of provisors.

By a statute of Henry IV. all persons who accept any provision from the pope, to be exempt from canonical obedience to their proper ordinary, are also subject to the penalties of "præmunire." This is the last of our ancient statutes touching this offence. This, then, is the original meaning of the offence which we call "præmunire;" viz., introducing a foreign power into this land, and creating *imperium in imperio*, by paying that obedience to a papal process, which constitutionally belonged to the king alone, even before the Reformation: at which time, indeed, the penalties of "præmunire" were extended to other papal encroachments, as the kingdom then entirely renounced the authority of the see of Rome. Therefore, by the several statutes of 24 Henry VIII., c. 12., and 25 Henry VIII., c. 19

Rome. Another act of Edward's, which may here be mentioned, was the institution of vicarages, and their endowment out of the possessions of the regular monks. Although he found it impracticable to deprive these bodies of their lands and tithes, by force, yet they consented to endow a vicarage, and provide for the residence of the vicar, on condition that he was one of their own body, and that the patronage of the vicarages remained with themselves.

The strict hand which the Edwards held over the different monasteries, and the great increase of academic foundations in the two universities, kept the monks within much narrower bounds than they had originally enjoyed. The friars, too, had taken no small part in thrusting monastics from that eminence which they formerly occupied. From all these concurring causes we find no mention of them, in a public character, during the reigns of those monarchs, nor as taking any part in the government of

and 21, to appeal from any of the king's courts to Rome, which (though illegal before), had at times been connived at; to sue to Rome for any license or dispensation, or to obey any process from thence, are made liable to the pains of "præmunire." And in order to restore to the king, in effect, the nomination to vacant bishopries, and yet to keep up the established forms, it is enacted by statute 25 Henry VIII., c. 20, that if the dean and chapter refuse to elect the person named by the king, or any archbishop or bishop to confirm or consecrate him, they shall fall within the penalties of præmunire." —*Blackstone*, book iv., ch. 8.

the kingdom, or interfering with the functions of royalty: and their private government being quiet and regular, they furnished but little matter in any respect for the notice of the historian. Occasionally, however, the peace of the monastery was disturbed, either by the intrusion of the friars,* or by disputes with their neighbours, which were sometimes carried

* Some friars coming to a Benedictine abbey in the thirteenth century, demanded admittance and the privilege of receiving the monks at confession. The principal of the company also demanded permission to preach; and enjoining silence for that purpose, the archdeacon of the monastery stopped him and said, "Gently, brother, and forbear a little until I have shewn your wisdom what my opinion is. We plain men who have been accustomed to ancient and approved usages, are filled with wonder and astonishment at these innovations. You not only affect to be *friar-preachers*, but *friar-confessors* also; nay, you would *extort* a confession. But let me shew you what the decree is, on that head, made and ratified by one of the greatest councils ever known;† and which has been held sacred and inviolable throughout Christendom." Then opening the book he read thus: "And let every person of either sex make faithful confession of their trangressions, alone, and once in the year only. And if any person shall choose to confess to a strange priest, let him first demand and obtain leave of his own proper priest; since, otherwise, the strange priest can neither bind nor absolve him. But let that priest be discreet and cautious, that he may pour wine and oil into the wounds of the guilty; and so wary, that he do not, by any means, betray or discover an offender; because, whosoever shall presume to discover anything confessed or spoken in the penitential trial, we not only decree that priest to be deposed from his sacerdotal office, but to be thrust into some close monastery, there to undergo perpetual penance." This impertinent interference, however, was thus checked only for a short time. In the following year another of these friars came to the abbey, and made a demand of a subsidy for the holy see, against which the abbot appealed to the pope, but this appeal, as might be expected, was in vain. At length, however,

† The Lateran council, held A D. 1215.

on with much rancour and animosity on both sides. In these contests it is observable that skill and management, and the sanction of ancient customs were on the side of the monks, while perseverance and impetuosity were the distinguishing characteristics of their opponents. Both parties, however, in these disputes outraged justice; the people by open violence,—the monks by intrigue. For when at length the former carried their point, they were intoxicated with success, and could not enjoy their victory with temper and moderation; and the monks, on the other hand, were ever ready in the hour of prosperity and court favour, to resume those privileges which they had prudently relinquished in the hour of trouble and of tumult. These contentions, however, were not altogether fruitless, nor were they the result of wanton aggression in one party, or of intolerance in the other. We may discern in them the rudiments of liberty, although much disfigured by violence, which was likely indeed to be the case in an age in which the advantages as well as principles of civil freedom were but little understood. The public

these demands were made so frequently, and were enforced with so much violence, that they spread an universal alarm. A fear arose lest princes and other powerful laymen whose ancestors impoverished their estates by founding, endowing, and enriching monasteries, should be induced to revoke those grants, and resume their property, as they had the pope for an example; especially since, contrary to the intention of the founders, these were devoured by strangers who were sent over to fatten on the sweets of England.

mind seemed to be craving after an undefined good; it felt itself shackled, but neither knew how to lighten the weight of its fetters, nor how to burst them asunder.

We learn from coeval circumstances of great moment, that the middle rank of men were rising at that time into consequence, and the lowest class was beginning to be emancipated from feudal servitude; but still, the English constitution was then only a rude and imperfect cast of that which we have now the happiness and the privilege to enjoy.

But to return from this digression. We have now seen the monastic system rise from an obscure and insignificant source, gradually acquire strength and consistency, and at length occupy the whole length and breadth of the land; while monks presided at the royal councils, and swayed the destinies of the nation. We have also seen the means which were employed for rousing the system from the lethargy into which it had fallen, and to enable it to fulfil *all* the purposes for which, under Divine Providence, it was introduced into the Church.

We have, moreover, seen the incipient signs of the decay of the system; and we have also noticed those unequivocal symptoms which seemed to indicate its approaching termination. It now only remains to trace its ruin through those short, but violent stages, which effected its annihilation.

CHAPTER XXIII.

A REVIEW OF THE CIRCUMSTANCES WHICH FIRST INDICATED THE OVERTHROW OF THE MONASTIC SYSTEM.

> "Quench'd is the golden statue's ray;
> The breath of heaven has blown away
> What toiling earth had piled,
> Scattering wise heart and crafty hand,
> As breezes strew on ocean's sand
> The fabric of a child."
>
> CHRISTIAN YEAR.

THE religious animosities which began to develop themselves in the days of Wyclif, were carried on with unabated ardour during the following century; and at the commencement of the sixteenth, it was evident they were approaching a crisis, which, however, had been considerably hastened by the discovery of printing, which occurred about the middle of the fifteenth century. These animosities were dis-

tinguished by blind intolerance on the one hand, and by a feverish restlessness on the other; for whatever were the advantages which resulted from the Reformation, we should be careful to discriminate between those whose sincere anxiety was the restoration of the Church to the purity of primitive Christianity, and those who from avarice, irreligion, and other motives, were discontented with the state of ecclesiastical affairs, and were thirsting for change.

It is impossible, indeed, to read the history of the proceedings which occurred during the progress of the Reformation, without being struck with the widely-different characters of those who were instrumental in accomplishing that important event. Without entering upon these particulars, it will be necessary to take a passing glance at them, preparatory to giving a brief detail of the overthrow of the monastic system in this country, of which these proceedings were the undoubted precursors.

A.D. 1513, Leo X. ascended the papal throne, a man totally unfit to direct the affairs of the Church, which, at his accession, were in a wild and stormy state; and being more inclined to sensual indulgence than to the promotion of religion, and the correction of existing abuses, he became remarkable for his prodigality, luxury, and imprudence. The ambition

of preceding pontiffs had imposed heavy imposts upon the faithful; but the necessities of Leo far exceeding those of his predecessor, induced him to have recourse to the disposal of indulgences, which were a source of considerable emolument, in such an open and shameless manner, as to arouse the indignation of Martin Luther, at that time professor of divinity at Wittenberg. As it is well known, he became the leader of the German Reformers; but dying before his plans had attained maturity, the Reformation on the Continent, wanting his guiding-hand, was very inferior to that which took place in our own branch of the Church, as Catholic unity was completely violated, and those who bear the name of this Reformer have thus been cut off from participating in the incalculable blessings of an Apostolical succession. The sentiments which Luther first expressed were received with applause by the greatest part of Germany, which had, indeed, long groaned under the heavy exactions of the Roman pontiffs, and their pardons. They were, however, discussed in several diets, or small councils; and when at length the whole weight of the Vatican was bearing down upon him, Luther appealed from the pope to a general council. But as he foresaw that this appeal would be treated with contempt at the court of Rome, and the sentence of excommunication would be put in

force, he withdrew from the communion of the Church of Rome, and struck out that eccentric path which has divided Christendom into so many sects. During these proceedings Leo died, and was succeeded by Adrian VI., who expressed an earnest desire to put an end to the unhappy divisions which were raging, by removing and correcting those abuses which had excited so great an opposition to the authority of his predecessor; and, moreover, declared his willingness to apply such remedies as should be deemed best adapted to heal the breaches. It was, however, too late; matters had proceeded too far for reconciliation.

While Luther and his party were exerting themselves in opposition to Rome in Germany, an event occurred in England which led the way to the rejection of the papal power in this country. This was the marriage of Henry the Eighth with Catherine of Arragon, aunt to Charles V., and his desire to free himself from this tie, on the ground of being more nearly connected by affinity with that princess than the laws of the Church allowed. It is unnecessary here to more than allude to the event, as it is elsewhere fully detailed;* but in this event we see that Providence can over-rule every thing for the accomplishment of its purposes, and that even the capricious

* See Massingberd's Hist. of Reform, c. 12.

lust of an arbitrary prince was made the effectual neans of freeing this kingdom from the usurped donination of Rome. But in the subsequent act of the ;reat national drama, it does not appear that the people were much benefitted. For when Henry withdrew himself from the communion of Rome, he retained the greatest portion of her errors, together with her imperious and persecuting spirit. He still adhered with inflexible pertinacity to several of the most objectionable doctrines of popery, and not unfrequently presented the terrors of death to those who differed from him in their religious sentiments.

Besides, he considered that the title of *Head of the English Church* transferred to him the enormous power of the Roman pontiff; and in consequence of this interpretation of his new title, he looked upon himself as absolute master of the religious opinions of his subjects, and was hence authorised to prescribe modes of faith according to his fancy! The influence, however, of Cranmer, who was then archbishop of Canterbury, counteracted, in many instances, the humour and vehemence of the monarch, although he zealously supported him in asserting his supremacy.

CHAPTER XXIV.

PROCEEDINGS WHICH OCCURRED PREVIOUSLY TO THE DISSOLUTION OF THE LESSER MONASTERIES.

"Christ's Church was holiest in her youthful days,
Ere the world on her smil'd:
So now, an outcast, she would pour her rays
More keen and undefiled;
Yet would not I that hand of force were mine
Which thrusts her from her awful, ancient shrine."

LYRA APOSTOLICA.

THE monastic system, which had been long declining in its character and efficacy, but which had for a time been roused to renewed exertions by the successful rivalry of the mendicant orders, was, at the commencement of the sixteenth century in a very unsatisfactory state. It was, however, by no means so bad as its enemies represented it; and a wholesome reformation would have restored it to the same

degree of purity, as that which was effected in the Church generally in this kingdom. There were, it is true, difficulties to be overcome, but they were not insuperable, and the same authority that destroyed the supremacy of the pope in this land, would have been amply sufficient to have abrogated his power over the English monasteries. They were unfortunately defenceless as bodies, and their possessions offering a temptation to plunderers, which the self-denial of the age was unequal to withstand, they were doomed to destruction. Among the various indications of the coming storm, none more clearly showed the direction in which it was advancing than the downfall of Wolsey. Kings had previously chosen ecclesiastics for their ministers, because there were always two great ruling interests in the kingdom, and it was easy for the monarch to govern both, when he placed a prelate of the Church at the head of his civil affairs. The elevation, therefore, of Wolsey had enabled Henry to govern peacefully and successfully through the early part of his reign. But when he found himself supported by the temporal peers and House of Commons, in a way he had never before experienced, he ventured to tell the pope that he could govern England without his assistance; and intimated his intention to renounce his spiritual jurisdiction, in case he refused to sanction

his divorce from Catherine. Wolsey being engaged in this negociation, and being suspected of advising those delays which attended the proceedings, he became an object of aversion to the king, who determined to seek new counsel, which he thought would be more faithful. In consequence of this determination, he ordered the Attorney-General to indict the minister in the Star Chamber, on the statute of præmunire; Wolsey was convicted, and degradation and confiscation followed. Henry followed up these proceedings with an impeachment in the House of Lords; but the bill was dismissed by the Commons through the reasoning and eloquence of Cromwell, Wolsey's secretary. The king then granted him a full pardon, which, however, he shortly afterwards revoked, by arresting him on the charge of high treason.

This prosecution of Wolsey was so capricious and wanton, as well as unjust, that no act of that impetuous monarch betrayed a mind less governed by wisdom or justice, and less tempered with mercy. His conduct, however, showed that he had listened to other advisers, and found that they were numerous enough in parliament to support him in all his views, without the authority or advice of the Church. Had it been otherwise, the lords would not have passed the bill of impeachment in a house when the

bishops, and abbots, and priors, who had seats, amounted to forty-three in number, viz., eighteen bishops, twenty-four abbots, and the prior of Coventry; and the temporal lords to no more than about sixty.

On the degradation of Wolsey, Sir Thomas More received the seals,* and Cromwell was taken into the king's council. By the advice of the latter, or, at least, with his concurrence, the king entertained a new project for raising money from the revenues of the clergy. Wolsey had previously shown him the way by demands and extortions,† and having himself fallen a victim to the rapine, as well as resentment of the king, the clergy beheld with little regret his avarice revenged upon himself. This, however, was no subject for congratulation, as the king was induced, through his success in ruining the first ecclesiastic in his kingdom, to employ the same artifice, with the same views, against the other clergy. When Wolsey was convicted on the statute of præmunire, his estates and goods of every kind were forfeited to the king. The revenues of St. Alban's Abbey, which ought to have reverted to their true owners, the prior and monks of the house, were, together with the revenues of the see of Winchester, reserved

* Sir Thomas More was the first layman who held them.

† Fiddes' Life of Wolsey, ch. xxv.

by the king for his own use; Wolsey retaining the title of abbot and bishop; and when Wolsey died, A.D. 1530, the king still kept possession, only, in order to save appearances, he caused one Robert Catton to be appointed abbot. On his death, Richard Boreman was chosen under the influence of the crown, that the king and parliament might be enabled to accomplish those views which they had now nearly brought to maturity.

CHAPTER XXV.

DISSOLUTION OF THE LESSER MONASTERIES.

"'Twas duty bound each convert-king to rear
His mother from the dust,
And pious was it to enrich, nor fear
Christ for the rest to trust;
But who shall dare make common, or unclean
What once has on the holy altar been?"
LYRA APOSTOLICA.

THE domestic peace of England was speedily to be exposed to very considerable hazard, by the violent innovations which the king was determined to make in the monastic system, in consequence of the opposition he had met with in the proceedings which followed his rupture with the court of Rome. The monks were exceedingly enraged against Henry, on account of the abolition of the papal power in England, as they considered it to be, what the sequel

proved to be true, the sole protection which they enjoyed against the rapacity of the crown, and the cupidity of the courtiers.

The bulls from Rome were no longer regarded with reverence or dread; and, in addition to this unequivocal symptom of decaying power, the monastic bodies saw that the progress of the Reformation abroad had everywhere been attended with the abolition of the regular orders, and they, therefore, naturally anticipated similar consequences in England. The king, indeed, still maintained the doctrine of purgatory, to which many of the later monasteries owed their endowments: but it was clearly foreseen that he would daily depart further from the doctrines in which he had been educated, and be drawn nearer to the tenets of the Reformers, with whom his political interests strongly induced him to unite.

Moved by these considerations, the monks, as well as the friars, employed their influence to inflame the people against the arbitrary government of the king; and Henry, therefore, determined to secure his own safety, by utterly destroying his opponents.

Cromwell, secretary of state, had been appointed vicar-general; an office in which the king's assumed supremacy was delegated to him. His first step was to employ commissioners to visit in person all religious foundations, and make enquiry about the man-

ner in which the rule of the house was maintained; whether devotion was observed, and how their revenues were expended. These commissioners were Leighton, Lee, London, Price, Gage, Petre, Bellasis, and others of less note, and having received their instructions, they commenced their enquiry, October 18, 1535.

During times of faction, whether political or religious, no equity is to be expected from adversaries; and, as it was well known that the king's intention in this visitation, was to find a pretence for abolishing monasteries, we may naturally conclude that the report of the commissioners was not to be relied upon by those who sought the truth. The slightest evidence appears to have been credited; and even the calumnies spread abroad by the friends of the Reformation were regarded as undeniable facts!

It is highly probable that the commissioners found some corruption, and that the monks of that age had greatly degenerated from their ancient predecessors; but still this did not furnish the king with a righteous pretext for destroying these institutions, and suppressing establishments, which, while they were monuments of the pious devotion of former ages, were still the seminaries of religion, the consolation of the aged, the support of the poor gentry, and the relief of the indigent. The suppression of these establish-

ments was, moreover, regarded as bold and daring, because the founders had established these houses, with the most earnest imprecations on all those who should disturb the endowment, or prevent their good intentions. The commissioners were ordered to carry on their inquiry with intimidation and threats; and hints of the danger to which the monks were exposed from the statute of præmunire. In consequence of this, many small houses surrendered their charters before Christmas. An offer was made, that all who had professed under twenty-four years of age should be at liberty to depart, and put on a secular habit; but the monks, unaccustomed to the busy world, preferred remaining in the quiet retirement of the cloister.

The report of the commissioners was completed and published early in the following year; and, therefore, some notion may be formed of the nature or value of such a report, which was finished in ten weeks! The character of the houses was set down in a very concise manner, without any notice of their general deportment; and frequently the faults of individuals involved the whole society in one and the same charge. Even with regard to individuals the charge was seldom proved, being of such a nature as to preclude anything like certainty! The king, however, thought the report would answer his

purpose; and, accordingly, when parliament met, February 4, 1536, he laid before them the detail which had been prepared, and the necessity of removing the scandal which hence arose. In a short time, an act was passed for dissolving all the monasteries whose revenues did not exceed two hundred pounds a-year.* This suppression comprehended three hundred and eighty houses, whose total revenues amounted to thirty-two thousand pounds a-year, and whose plate and jewels were valued at one hundred thousand pounds.

It is said that in consequence of the suppression of these houses, upwards of ten thousand persons were cast on the wide world, without any other allowance than forty shillings and a new gown; and even this pittance was not afforded to all. It is moreover said, that such as desired to continue their profession were allowed to go into the greater monasteries, and that such *priests* as chose to go into the world received the above allowance, and those who readily surrendered received an annual pension for life.† Thirty-

* A few abbeys had previously been suppressed, and their revenues had been bestowed upon newly-founded colleges in the universities, and this was especially the case with the alien priories, which were dissolved during the reign of Henry VI. These, however, were all suppressed, with the consent either of the pope or bishops, and the proceedings which took place on that occasion were very different to the proceedings which followed the passing of the act above referred to.

† Tanner, p. xxiii.

one of these lesser houses obtained the king's licence to continue for some time longer, viz., Bittlesden, in Bucks; Chatteris and Denny, in Cambridgeshire; St. Mary's, in Chester; Le Dale, or Parco Stanley, in Derbyshire; Canon Leigh and Polleshoo, in Devonshire; Bindon, in Dorsetshire; St. Mary's, in Winchester; Wormsley, in Herefordshire; St. Mary's, in Huntingdonshire; Cokesand, in Lancashire; Grace Dieu and Ulvescroft, in Leicestershire; Heynings and Kyme, in Lincolnshire; De la Pray, in Northamptonshire; Alnewick, and St. Bartholomew's Newcastle, in Northumberland; Newstead and Walingwell, in Nottinghamshire, Heppe or Shappe, in Westmoreland; Lacock, in Wiltshire; Cockill, in Worcestershire; Chartreuse, at Hull; Marike, Keling, Bilaund, Egglestone, and Delaval, in Yorkshire; and Nethe, in Wales. It must be remembered that all these were included in the act for suppressing the lesser monasteries, and only obtained a respite for a short time, either through interest, or in order to soothe the excited feelings which the proceedings were likely to produce. The discontent which broke out immediately on the passing of the act was probably increased by the secular as well as regular clergy; and these were stimulated by some of the more powerful abbots. The discontent actually broke out into a rebellion, in Lincolnshire, in October, 1536,

when Dr. Makeril, prior of Bailings, disguised like a cobler, and calling himself "Captain Cobler," drew after him a great body of men, who, however, were soon dispersed by the Duke of Suffolk, who came against them with a small army, and promised pardon to those who would lay down their arms. But in six days after this insurrection was quelled, another broke out in Yorkshire, called "*The Pilgrimage of Grace*," which became very formidable, and was neither easily nor speedily suppressed.

The act for the dissolution of the lesser monasteries placed the whole of their revenues and estates at the king's disposal, and for the better management of them, a court was instituted, called "*The court of augmentation of the king's revenues*," consisting of a chancellor, a treasurer, an attorney, a solicitor, ten auditors, seventeen receivers, a clerk, an usher, and a messenger. It was strongly suspected that this formidable apparatus foreboded no good to the Church, and that they would learn how, and soon be able to manage the whole ecclesiastical revenues of the kingdom.

These proceedings are a powerful evidence of the arbitrary character of the times, and manifest that cowardly spirit of oppression which is usually practised by tyrants. Had the king attacked at once the whole of the monastic establishments of the land,

his attempt to invade their property, and destroy their privileges, would probably have been unsuccessful. But he first attacked the weak, and these being overcome, deprived the greater monasteries of a certain kind of aid, and, moreover, furnished the king with a precedent for his ulterior views. Fearing lest the lands which were thus forcibly taken from the lesser monastic bodies, should at some future time be attempted to be resumed, Cromwell advised the king to secure the support of his friends by letting them enjoy a share of the plunder,* so that his proceedings might be viewed with more complacency by the aristocracy, and the lands being thus in the possession of many individuals, there would be much trouble in recovering them, and consequently less temptation to make the attempt. He accordingly

* There is scarcely a peer in the kingdom, whose property has not been augmented from this source. Few profited more in this respect than the Russells, and the principal seat of the Duke of Bedford is at once a memorial of the share which his ancestor had in the destruction of the monastic system, and of the reward which he received from the *arch-destroyer*. Whilst the nobles and the powerful were thus enriched, the unfortunate inmates of the abbeys were in a widely-different condition. Monastics, both male and female, who had previously enjoyed the comforts of life were now frequently compelled to beg, and by swelling the number of those whom their bounty had previously fed, compelled the enactment, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, of the law for the compulsory support of the poor. Here, however, it may be observed that those who maintain that the Church once supported the poor, and ought to do so now, should recollect of how much property the Church has been stripped since those days. Restore the property thus taken from the Church, and the Church will willingly support the poor.

proceeded to reward his partizans with honours, and enabled them to support their new dignities, by bestowing upon them a portion of the abbey lands, of which he had got possession. He created Sir William Fitzwilliams Earl of Southampton, who appears to have earned his title by his readiness, on all occasions, to support every proposal for suppressing the papal authority. Sir John Russell, who had, in his youth, been an attendant on the king in all his sports and tournaments, and who had, moreover, in his place in parliament, been always obedient to the king's views, was made comptroller of the king's household, with the title of Lord Russell; and Sir W. Pawlet, who had also supported the king in parliament, was created Baron St. John. Some idea may be formed of the rewards which others received, from a remark which occurs in the biography of Sir W. Pawlet: it is said that "he lived at a time when happened the dissolution of abbeys; which was the harvest of estates; and it argued idleness if any courtier had his barns empty."

This new source of riches was so acceptable to the king and his court, that he made no application to parliament, at that time, for any supply, although he foresaw that he should probably be involved in a war with the Emperor Charles. Having been thus far successful, the king was determined to proceed, and

during the winter of 1536, directed another visitation to be made; requiring the visitors to examine every thing which related to the conversation of monastics, and to discover how they stood affected to the king's supremacy, and how far they were concerned in the disturbances which had arisen in consequence of the dissolution of the lesser monasteries. The report of these commissioners was published in the following spring, and every thing which had a tendency to excite the people against the monks was carefully exposed and exaggerated. This report did not attempt to represent the monastic bodies as profligate and immoral, because that charge would not have been believed, and the king himself had borne testimony to the character of the greater monasteries in the preamble to the bill for suppressing the lesser, in which he says, "In the greater monasteries, thanks be to God, religion is right well observed and kept up." But an effort was made to throw ridicule upon the images and relics of the different monasteries, charging the monks with effecting by machinery what they wished to be considered as supernatural, and affirming that all their reliques were counterfeit. Although there was probably some truth in this report, yet it, like the preceding one, was doubtless much exaggerated for the purpose of apparently justifying the king in the purpose which he had in view.

The following year produced more injunctions from the vicegerent to the commissioners, and a further proof that the king was not *really* interested in the cause of the Reformation. For while he was persecuting Romanists for denying his supremacy, he condescended to enter into a formal dispute with one Lambert (who had previously disputed with the bishops), on the subject of the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper ; and being assisted, on this occasion, by Cranmer and others, the dispute ended in the committal of Lambert to the flames.*

This and other persecutions of those who denied the bodily presence of Christ in the Holy Communion, is a manifest proof that the king was influenced in his conduct by other motives than the establishment of the truth by the suppression of error. During this year, twenty-one monasteries were suppressed and sold, and this proved a further incentive to the rapacious enemies of the ancient system to hasten the final catastrophe.

* Foxe's Acts and Monuments, vol. 5, p. 236. New edition.

CHAPTER XXVI.

DISSOLUTION OF THE GREATER MONASTERIES.

Is there no sound about our Altars heard?
"Let us depart; these English souls are seared,
Who, for one grasp of perishable gold,
Would brave the curse of holy men of old
Laid on the robbers of the shrines they reared."

LYRA APOSTOLICA.

No act for the suppression of the greater monasteries had been passed, when the report alluded in the preceding chapter was carefully dispersed, in order to ruin their character. Such a report, connected with other circumstances, would, of course, effect the desired result; and the minds of many being now alienated from monastic institutions, enabled the king to take further steps for the entire destruction of the whole monastic system. He, however, proceeded warily in his work. In the parliament which assembled April 28, 1539, several important bills were in-

troduced, which appear to maintain rather conflicting principles. The king, at that time, had taken part with the Reformers, not, however, with a view of promoting their principles, but in order to employ them as instruments for subverting the old papal clergy, and thus extirpating the authority of the pope. This having been in a great measure accomplished, he began to throw off his disguise, and to prove that he did not mean to change the religion of the kingdom. As soon, therefore, as the legislature met, he caused a bill to be introduced for the abolishing diversity of opinion. This was said to have been done by the suggestion of Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, who was one of the most influential advisers of the crown. The bill contained a perfect restoration of the old Romish doctrine, making it penal to deny transubstantiation, or to reject private masses, or auricular confession; the punishment to be by burning or hanging. Cranmer in vain endeavoured to oppose this measure, which passed both houses with great dispatch, and this proceeding afforded the anomalous spectacle of parliament supporting the old religion, while the main professors of it were, by the same authority, destroyed!

By another act, the parliament granted to the king all the lands of the monasteries which had been surrendered, and, as it was pretended, had been surren-

dered freely; and lest any doubt should remain as to that fact, parliament thought it necessary to decide the point in the affirmative! By this act, however, no suppression or dissolution was enjoined, as by the first act, which ordained an actual suppression of all those whose revenues did not exceed two hundred pounds a-year.

It must, therefore, be borne in mind that no religious houses were, in direct terms, suppressed under this act, although it is generally supposed there were; the act only provided that the surrender, which had already been made, or should be made in future, should be confirmed; and it was, moreover, enacted, that the lands so surrendered should pass to the king, exactly as the monasteries had held them. This act also was quickly passed, as the king had intimated his intention of employing this new accession of wealth in useful foundations; and, in consequence of this, another bill was passed, to enable him to erect and endow new bishopricks.*

* Henry VIII. founded six new bishopricks, viz., Westminster, which was changed by Queen Elizabeth into a deanery, and twelve prebendaries, Peterborough, Chester, Gloucester, Bristol, and Oxford. The king may, indeed, be said to have founded thirteen, by his new founding Canterbury, Winchester, Durham, Worcester, Rochester, Norwich, Ely, and Carlisle, and turning the abbots, priors, and monks, in those places, into deans and prebendaries. It is said to have been his wish to have founded eighteen sees.

When these bills were read in the House of Lords, not more than twenty abbots and priors were present, and the bishops, if present, would only have increased the number to thirty-eight; while the lay lords amounted to about fifty-six. It was, indeed, a subject in which these latter peers were much interested, because, in the course of the debate, it was said that the lands ought to go to the heirs and successors of the donors by reversion; while others maintained that they should fall to the king. In support of the king's right, it was argued that all the lands possessed by heathen temples, which Theodosius destroyed, came to the emperor's exchequer; because, by the will of the donors, they were for ever put out of the power of their heirs and successors.

In favour of the reversion, it was said that these endowments had been made in consideration of duties to be done, masses to be said, and holy offices to be performed; therefore, when these duties ceased to be performed, from whatever cause this might arise, it was but just that the hire, on the non-performance of the condition, should go to the heirs of the founder by reversion. This opinion was well founded: but then it was said that many of these endowments had been made by the king's ancestors and predecessors, and therefore he was thought to have a double claim. The example of Theodosius

being thus backed by the claim arising from reversion, afforded a plausible pretext for giving most of the abbey lands to the king,* and leaving them entirely at his disposal. Whatever right, however, the king might have to the surrendered lands, he could have no possible right to the goods of the monastic bodies; these were undoubtedly the property of the then possessors of them, and therefore, on every principle of justice and equity, they ought not to have been robbed of them. If the voice of humanity could have been heard in this general clamour of avarice and rapine, these goods would have been sold, and the money would have been reserved for the use of the lawful owners, who were soon to be turned into the wide world, with a very slender pension for their future support. But these goods together with a great quantity of valuable ornaments from the cathedrals, were carried away by the Visitors; and being swallowed up in the royal vortex, were never seen or heard of more.

This same parliament immediately passed the celebrated act of precedency, which seems to have

* Where the foundations were from private sources, and the heirs of the founders still exercised the rights of patrons, in many cases the abbey lands reverted to those heirs. But when the patrons had ceased to claim their rights, or there were no remaining heirs of the founders, as was, perhaps, the state of things in the great majority of cases, the king became possessed of all.

been passed out of compliment to Cromwell, whose office of vicegerent being new, gave him no rank by usage or precedent. The king, however, placed him above all other persons, and next to the royal family. When the parliament met April 12, 1540, the king created Cromwell Earl of Essex; Sir Thomas Audley, Lord Audley;* and William Parr, Lord Parr, who was afterwards created Marquis of Northampton.

During the year 1539, fifty-seven surrenders were made, and among them were the abbeys of Westminster, Waltham, St. Alban's, and St. Peter in Gloucester. In the following year, a special act was passed for the suppression of the prior and hospitallers of St. John of Jerusalem, who had a house in Clerkenwell, and who had strenuously maintained their rights against the royal aggression. The king, who would endure no society that refused to acknowledge his paramount authority, was, obliged to have recourse to parliament for the dissolution of this order, even after an act had passed for the confirmation of the inroads which had been made on monastic property. Although the meaning of this latter act was clearly understood, it contained no

* On the resignation of Sir Thomas More, 1532, Audley, then Speaker of the House of Commons, was appointed keeper of the great seal; and in January, 1533, he was made Chancellor.

positive command to suppress, nor did it enjoin the abbot to surrender, but appeared to be merely a confirmation of all that had been, or was about to be done. Its arbitrary operation, however, was soon felt. The abbot of Reading refused to surrender to the commissioners, on which he was seized and hurried away to London: charged, tried, and convicted in the court of King's Bench, as being guilty of high treason; and shortly afterwards was executed at Tyburn, with two of his monks, who were involved in the same charge. The name of this abbot was Hugh Faringdon, and he had ruled his abbey nineteen years with great prudence and economy, as well as with abundant hospitality and charity. The case of poor Whiting, the abbot of Glastonbury, to which allusion has already been made, was equally unjust and wicked, and attended with circumstances of greater cruelty and inhumanity. Their love of oppression not being fully satisfied, the visitors selected the Abbot of Colchester as another victim. He had firmly resisted all the temptations with which they had endeavoured to persuade him to surrender his trust; but he was resolved rather to abide his fate than to abandon his abbey. He was consequently subjected to the same kind of trial as that which had determined the fates of the Abbots of Reading and

Glastonbury ; and being of course convicted, he was in a few days afterwards executed at Colchester.

The visitors had now completed their work, and, through the means of intimidation or bribery, all the abbeys were surrendered to the king ; the revenues of which were said to amount to one hundred thousand pounds a year, besides a large sum in plate and jewels. The monastics received various pensions out of the exchequer, and some of them retired to the universities, or were presented to livings. Thus the whole of the monasteries were alienated from their rightful owners; and institutions which had been founded with the most pious intentions, were diverted from their original use, and applied to the support of voluptuous pleasures. The diversion of revenues, however, did not satisfy the commissioners, or visitors ; they were determined to destroy the monastic system entirely ; and, in order that there might be no return to it, the buildings were rudely demolished, so as to be incapable of affording shelter. The expedition which was used in effecting their destruction will appear from the following letter, addressed by Bellasis, one of the commissioners in the first visitation, to the vicegerent :—

"Plesythe your good lordship to be advertysed,

I have taken down all the lead of Jervase,* and made it in pecys of half foders, which lead amountyth to the number of eighteen score and five foders; with thirty and four foders and a half that were there before; and the same lead cannot be conveit nor caryed unto the next sombre, for the ways in that country are so foull and deep, that no caryage can pass in wyntre; and as concernynge the raising and taking down the house, iff it be your lordshipp's pleasure, I am minded to lett it stand to the spring of the year, by reason of the days are now so short it would be double charges to do it now; and as concernynge the selling of the belles, I cannot sell them above fifteen shillings the hundreth; wherein I would gladly know your lordshipp's pleasure, whether I should sell them after that price, or send them up to London. And if they be sent up, surely the caryage will be costly from that place to the water. And as for Bridlington, I have doun nothing there as yet, but spayreth it to March next, because the days now are so short, and from such time as I begyn, I trust shortly to dispatch it after such fashion, that when all is finished, I trust your lordshipp shall think that I have been no evil housbound in all such things as your lordshipp appointed me to do; and

* Jorval, a Cistercian Abbey in Yorkshire.

thus the Holy Ghost preserve your lordshipp in honour.

"At York, the 14th day of November, 1538, by your most bounden beadman.

"Richard Bellasis."

It is impossible to view the venerable ruins of many religious houses without feeling grieved that the buildings were apparently held responsible for the imputed faults of their owners. Had the king been a man of prudent counsels, or had he been influenced by honest advisers, he would have preserved these institutions, as being well calculated to promote the general happiness of his people. If we allow that all the charges which were brought against the monasteries were well founded, which, however, we should feel inclined to dispute, because these charges were seldom proved, still they admitted of correction. For instance, it would be ridiculous to suppose that institutions, in which the king himself is said to have declared, that "religion was right well observed and kept up," were so very desperate in their corruption as to be incapable of reformation! But no attempt was made; their riches offering a strong temptation to avarice, and their comparatively defenceless condition exposing them to the rude grasp of the spoiler, reports of misrule and abuse

were raised, and industriously spread, and instead of a judicious reformation being applied, it was determined that the whole should be swept away! It would surely have been conducive to the public welfare, if the reformation of the Church in general, in this kingdom, had been extended to the monastic establishments: so that the *ancient* discipline could have been restored, and the establishments themselves placed under the inspection of the bishops, and made subject to their visitations. Wherever the monastic rule was strictly observed, then they lived within their income, and expended the remainder in such beneficial works as were advantageous to their respective neighbourhoods. Indeed, if this had not been the case, they would not have supported a character, for so many ages, of public utility; and been, in consequence, considered by former kings and ministers, as public agents in their hands for procuring common advantages. The monks in general were men who had no means of converting the abbey estates into a private fortune; and, if they had, they had no inducement, as the monastic rules required a sacrifice of all self-interests. If avarice appeared among them, it was not for the benefit of the individual, but, like labour, was employed for the community. They were, indeed, men by whom personal poverty was considered as an

honour, and to whom implicit obedience stood in the place of freedom. Monasteries may have been occasionally the offspring of enthusiasm, but they had ever been considered, and might still have been employed as the instruments of wisdom.

But the resentment which the king entertained against the pope, his love of arbitrary power, and the wealth which a pliant parliament was ready to lay at his feet, combined to bring about such a confiscation, or, as the Church will ever consider it, such a *sacrilege*, as had never been witnessed in any Christian country. This spoliation was the work of the state prior to the Reformation; for the only change which had taken place in the religious opinions of the king and his parliament, was relative to the supremacy; in all other points they entertained the same belief as those whom they oppressed. It should, moreover, be observed, that all the bishops of *the new learning*, as the leading Reformers were called, were opposed to this misapplication of the abbey lands.

It would be foreign to the object of this volume to investigate the principles which produced this result; or we should attempt to trace them to that policy which is the characteristic of the Roman Hierarchy. But before we conclude, we would inquire what became of the yearly spoils which the

visitors remitted to the exchequer? No manifest use of it appears, except the founding of six bishopricks, which were partially endowed with some of the abbey estates, the rest of the endowment consisting of unappropriated tithes; and whatever changes were made in the chapters of cathedrals cost nothing, as they were endowed with confiscated lands or tithes. It was found that the rental of all the abbeys, &c., which were six hundred and sixteen in number, amounted to the yearly sum of one hundred and forty-two thousand pounds, and were probably worth much more, as they were invariably let considerably under their value. There was also found, in the several large houses, at least one hundred thousand pounds in gold and silver; and the sale of the monasteries themselves produced a very large, but unknown sum.

The foundation of two of our great colleges, in addition to the bishopricks,* is insufficient to account for the proceeds of the abbey lands: and the other foundations, besides those to which we have already alluded, were too insignificant to make up the remaining sum. It was, therefore, either expended upon profligacy, or bestowed upon those interested advisers who had been the active agents in the work of demolition.

* Christ Church, Oxford, and Trinity College, Cambridge.

Thus terminated an institution which had grown in this kingdom with our national growth, and increased in corresponding strength ; which had been supported and cherished by a long line of kings, and venerated by successive generations ; which had received the stranger at the hospitable board, and given shelter to the houseless ; which, in an age of violence, had afforded a safe asylum for the ark of Christ's Holy Religion, and kept alive a spirit of devotion. Its course, however, was run ; and as the Almighty manifests an unity of purpose by a diversity of instruments, He permitted a cruel and avaricious age to inflict upon itself, as well as on succeeding times, a grievous, though, we trust, not an irremediable injury.

THE END.

APPENDIX No. 1.

THE following is an enumeration of the different religious houses which were in existence at the time when the monastic system was abolished in England, and they are arranged under the Orders to which they respectively belonged. Those marked with an Italic *a* were reckoned among the greater abbeys, and those printed in capitals were also mitred.

Benedictine Monks.

Berkshire . .	Abingdon. *a*
	Henley.
	READING. *a*
Bucks . . .	Snelleshall.
Cambridgeshire	Ely. *a*
	THORNEY. *a*
Cheshire	Berkenhead.
	Chester. *a*

Cornwall . .	Truwardraith.
Cumberland .	St. Bees.
	Wetherall.
Devonshire. .	Exeter.
	Pilton.
	TAVISTOCK. *a*
	Totness.
Dorsetshire . .	Abbotesbury. *a*
	Cern. *a*
	Milton. *a*
	Shirburn. *a*
Durham . .	Durham. *a*
	Finchale.
	Jarrow.
	Weremouth.
Essex . . .	COLCHESTER. *a*
	Column.
	Hatfield Peverell.
	Hatfield Regis.
	Walden. *a*
Gloucestershire	Gloucester. *a*
	Stanley.
	TEWKESBURY. *a*
	WINCHELCOMBE. *a*
Hants . . .	Winchester. *a*
	HYDE. *a*
Herefordshire .	Hereford. *a*
	Leominster.
Herts . . .	ST. ALBAN'S. *a*
	Hertford.
	Redburn.

Huntingdonshire,	St. Neot's *a*
	Ramsey. *a*
Kent . . .	Canterbury.
	Dover.
	Feversham. *a*
	Folkestone.
	Rochester. *a*
Lancashire . .	Holand.
	Lytham.
	Penwortham.
Lincolnshire. .	Bardney. *a*
	Belvoir.
	Crowland. *a*
	Lincoln.
	Spalding. *a*
	Stamford.
Middlesex . .	Westminster. *a*
Monmouthshire	Bergavenny.
	Monmouth.
	Stroguil.
Norfolk . . .	St. Bennet of Hulme. *a*
	Binham.
	Horsham.
	Norwich. *a*
	Wymondham. *a*
Northamptonshire	Peterborough. *a*
Northumberland	Farn Island.
	Lindisfarne.
	Tynmouth. *a*
Notts . . .	Blyth.
	Marshe.
Oxfordshire .	Eynsham. *a*

	Durham College.
Shropshire . .	Bromfield.
	Morfield.
	Shrewsbury. [a]
Somersetshire	Athelney. [a]
	Bath.
	Dunster.
	Glastonbury. [a]
	Michelney. [a]
Staffordshire .	Burton [a]
	Tutbury.
Suffolk . . .	Bury St. Edmunds. [a]
	Eye.
	Hoxne.
Surrey . . .	Chertsey. [a]
Sussex . . .	Battell. [a]
	Boxgrave.
Warwickshire .	Alenceaster.
	Avecote.
	Coventry. [a]
Wiltshire . .	Malmsbury.
Worcestershire.	Evesham. [a]
	Malvern Major. [a]
	Malvern Minor.
	Pershore. [a]
	Worcester [a]
Yorkshire . .	Grosmont
	Middleburgh.
	Richmond.
	Selby. [a]
	Whitby. [a]

York. a

Anglesea . .	Glannach.
Brecknockshire	Brecknock.
Carmarthenshire	Cadweli.
Carnarvonshire	Bardsey.
Cardiganshire .	Cardigan.
Glamorganshire	Gwenny.
Pembrokeshire .	St. Dogmael.
	Pembroke.
	Pilla.

Benedictine Nuns.

Bedfordshire .	Elstow. a
	Mergate.
Bucks . . .	Ankerwyke.
	Merlow.
	Meuresley.
Cambridgeshire	Chateris.
	Ikelington.
	Swafham.
Cheshire. . .	Chester.
Cumberland .	Armethwait.
	Seton.
Derbyshire . .	King's Mead, Derby.
Devonshire . .	Polleshoo.
Dorsetshire . .	Shaftesbury. a
Essex . . .	Barking. a
	Hedingham.
Hants . . .	Rumesey. a
	Whcrewell.
	Winchester.

Herts . . .	Cestrehunt.
	Flamsted.
	Sopewell.
Huntingdonshire.	Hinchingbrooke.
Kent . . .	Canterbury. St. Sepulchre
	Malling *a*
	Shepey.
Leicestershire. .	Langley.
Lincolnshire . .	Fosse.
	Grimsby.
	Humbersteyne.
	Stanfield.
	Stamford.
Middlesex . .	Kilborn.
	Clerkenwell. *a*
	Haliwell. *a*
	St. Helens. *a*
	Stratford.
Monmouthshire	Usk.
Norfolk . . .	Blackborough.
	Cairo.
	Thetford.
Northamptonshire,	Katebi.
Northumberland	Halystane.
	Lambley.
	Nesseham.
	Newcastle.
Notts . . .	Walingwels.
Oxfordshire .	Godestowe. *a*
	Studley.
Somersetshire	Beauve.

	Canyngton.
Staffordshire .	Brewood.
Suffolk . . .	Bungay.
	Redlingfield.
Sussex . . .	East-Bourn.
	Ruspur.
Warwickshire .	Heanwood.
	Oldbury.
	Polesworth.
	Wroxhall.
Wiltshire . .	Keinton.
	Wilton. [a]
Yorkshire . .	Arden.
	Arthington.
	Brunnum.
	Handale.
	Kelynge.
	Mareis.
	Maryke.
	Molesby.
	Monketon.
	Rosedale.
	Thickhed.
	York. Clementhorp.

Carthusian Monks.

Lincolnshire .	Eppworth. [a]
Middlesex . .	London. [a]
Notts . . .	Beauvale.
Somersetshire .	Henton. [a]
	Witham. [a]

Surrey . . .	Skene. [a]
Warwickshire	Coventry.
Yorkshire . .	Kingston.
	Mountgrace.

Cistercian Monks.

Bedfordshire .	Wardon [a]
	Woburn [a]
Bucks . .	Bittlesden.
	Medmenham.
Cheshire . .	Combermere. [a]
	Vale Royal. [a]
Cumberland .	Calder.
	Holm Cultram. [a]
Devonshire .	Bockland. [a]
	Buckfastre. [a]
	Dunkeswell. [a]
	Ford. [a]
	Newenham. [a]
Dorsetshire .	Bindon.
Essex . . .	Coggleshale. [a]
	Stratford. [a]
	Tilfey.
Gloucestershire	Flexeley.
	Hayles. [a]
Hants. .	Beaulieu.
	Netteley.
	Quarres.
Herefordshire	Dore.

Huntingdonshire	Saltrey.
Kent . .	Boxley. *a*
Lancashire .	Furnes. *a*
	Whalley. *a*
Leicestershire .	Garendon.
Lincolnshire .	Kirkstead. *a*
	Louth Park.
	Revesbye. *a*
	Swineshed.
	Vaudey.
Middlesex . .	St. Mary of Grace. *a*
Monmouthshire	Grace Dieu.
	Llantarnham.
	Tintern.
Northamptonshire,	Pipewell. *a*
Northumberland	Newminster.
Notts. . . .	Rufford.
Oxfordshire .	Brueriay.
	Rewle.
	Tame. *a*
Shropshire . .	Bildewas.
Somersetshire .	Clyve.
Staffordshire .	Crokesden.
	Dieulacres. *a*
	Hulton.
Suffolk. . .	Sibton. *a*
Surrey . . .	Waverley.
Sussex . . .	Roberts-Bridge. *a*
Warwickshire .	Combe. *a*
	Mereval. *a*
	Stoneley.

Wiltshire . .	Kingswood. *a*
	Stanlegh. *a*
Worcestershire	Bordesley. *a*
Yorkshire . .	Byland. *a*
	Fountains. *a*
	Joreval. *a*
	Kirkstall. *a*
	Melsa. *a*
	River. *a*
	Roche. *a*
	Sallay.
Cardiganshire .	Strata Florida.
Carmarthenshire,	Alba Landa.
Denbighshire .	Maynan.
	De Valle Crucis.
Flintshire .	Basingweek.
Glamorganshire	Margan.
	Neth.
Merionethshire	Kinner.
Montgomeryshire,	Ystrat Marchel.
Radnorshire .	Cumhyre.

Cistercian Nuns.

Dorsetshire .	Tarent. *a*
Hants . .	Winteneye.
Lincolnshire .	Cotham.
	Cokewell.
	Greenfield.
	Heyninges.
	Lekeburn.
	Stykeswold.

Norfolk . .	Marham.
Northamptonshire,	Sewardesley.
Shropshire . .	Brewood.
Warwickshire .	Pinly.
Worcestershire	Cokehill.
	Whiston.
Yorkshire . .	Nun Appleton.
	Basidale.
	Elreton.
	Esseholt.
	Hanepole.
	Keldon.
	Kirkleyhes.
	Sinningthwait.
	Swinkey.
	Wyckham.
Cardiganshire	Llanlier.
Montgomeryshire,	Llanlugan.

Cluniac Monks.

Devonshire .	Barnstaple.
Essex . . .	Prittlewell.
Herefordshire	Clifford.
Kent . . .	Horton.
Monmouthshire	Malpas.
Norfolk . .	Bromholm.
	Castleacre. [a]
	Thetford. [a]
Northamptonshire,	Northampton. [a]
Notts . .	Lenton [a]

Shropshire .	Wenlock *a*
Somersetshire	Montacute. *a*
Staffordshire	Dudley.
Suffolk . .	Wangford.
Surrey . .	Bermondsey. *a*
Sussex . . .	Lewes. *a*
Wiltshire . .	Farleigh.
Yorkshire . .	Monk Bretton. *a*
	Pontefract. *a*

Cluniac Nuns.

Northamptonshire, De la Pre.

Augustine Monks, or Austin Canons.

Bedfordshire ·	Bissemede·
	Caldwell.
	Dunstable· *a*
	Newenham· *a*
Berkshire . ·	Bustleham· *a*
Bucks . . .	Missenden. *a*
	Noctele· *a*
Cambridgeshire	Anglesey·
	Barnwell. *a*
Cheshire . .	Norton·
Cornwall . .	Bodmin.
	St· Germans. *a*
	Launceston· *a*
Cumberland .	Carlisle· *a*
	Lanecost.

Derbyshire	Darley. *a*
	Greisley.
	Repton.
Devonshire	Frethelstoke.
	Hertland.
	Plympton. *a*
Essex	Berden.
	Chick. *a*
	Colchester.
	Dunmowe.
	Lighes.
	Thremhall.
	WALTHAM. *a*
Gloucestershire	Bristol. *a*
	CIRENCESTER. *a*
	Gloucester.
	Lantony. *a*
Hants	Bromere.
	Motisfont.
	Porchester. *a*
	Southampton.
	Twinham. *a*
Herefordshire	Flanesford.
	Wigmore. *a*
	Wormeleye.
Hertfordshire	Royston.
	Wymondesley.
Huntingdonshire	Stoneley.
	Huntingdon.
Kent	Bilsington.

	Canterbury. *a*
	Cumbwell.
	Leedes. *a*
Lancashire . .	Burscough.
	Conisheved.
	Kertmel.
Leicestershire .	Bradley.
	Breedon.
	Ulvescroft.
	Kirkby.
	Landa. *a*
	Leicester. *a*
	Osulveston.
Lincolnshire .	Bourn.
	Ellesham.
	Hyrst.
	Kyme.
	Markeby.
	Newstead by Stamford.
	Nocton.
	Thorneton. *a*
	Thornholm.
	Torkesey.
	Wellow.
Middlesex . .	St. Bartholomews. *a*
	Elsing Spittle.
Monmouthshire	Lantony.
Norfolk . .	Beeston.
	Buckenham.
	Cokesford.

Norfolk . . .	Flitcham.
	Hempton.
	Hickling.
	Pentney.
	Thetford.
	Waburn.
	Walsingham. *a*
	Westacre. *a*
	Weybridge.
Northamptonshire	Canons Ashby.
	Chacomb.
	Castle Hymel.
	Northampton.
Northumberland	Bamburgh.
	Brekenburne.
	Hexham.
	Ovingham.
Notts. . . .	Felley.
	Newstead.
	Shelford.
	Thurgarton. *a*
	Worksop. *a*
Oxfordshire .	Bicester.
	Dorchester. *a*
	Oseney. *a*
	Wroxton.
Rutlandshire .	Brooke
Shropshire. . .	Chirbury
	Haghman. *a*
	Lilleshull. *a*
	Wombridge.

Somersetshire .	Barlynch
	Bruton. *a*
	Byrkley.
	Keynsham. *a*
	Taunton. *a*
	Worspring.
Staffordshire .	Rocester.
	De Sartis.
	Stafford.
	Stone.
	Trentham.
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THE following is the valuation of the revenues of the suppressed monasteries, according to the survey which was taken at the time when they were dissolved:—

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25	Gilbertines	2421	13	9
3	Fontevrauld Nuns	825	8	6½
3	Minoresses	548	10	6
1	Brigettine	1731	8	9¾
2	Bonhommes	859	5	11¾
555		136710	14	7¾
28	Knights Hospitalers	5394	6	5¼
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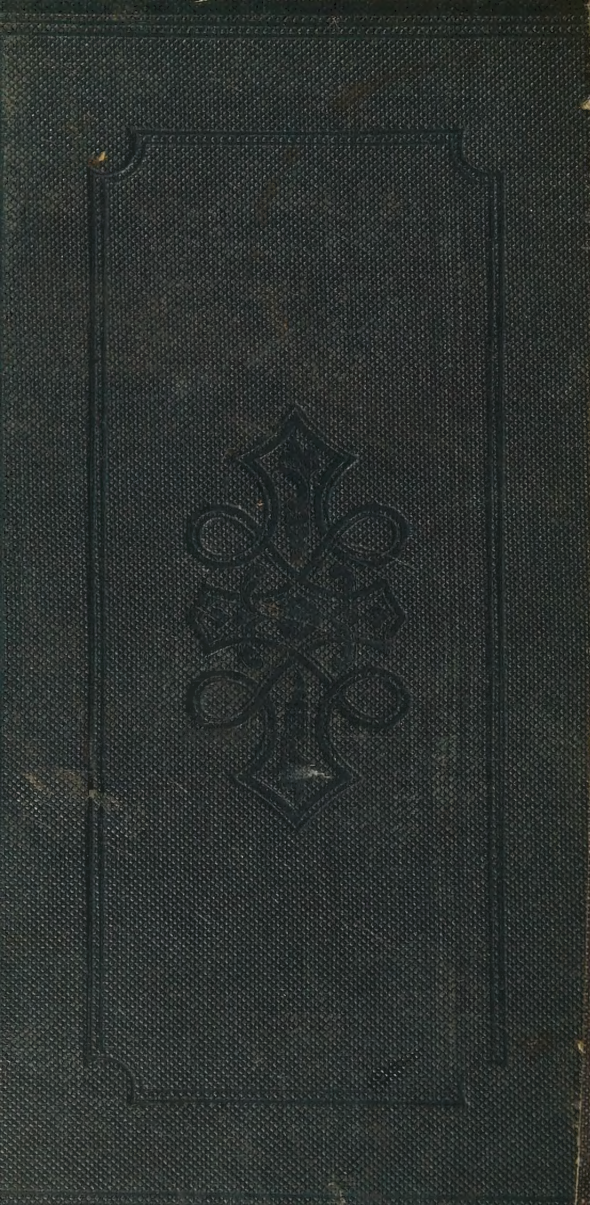
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